CATHOLIC TRACTS.

A NET

FOR THE

FISHERS OF MEN:

THE SAME WHICH

CHRIST GAVE TO HIS APOSTLES.

WHEREIN

THE POINTS CONTROVERTED BETWIXT CATHOLICS AND SECTARIES ARE BRIEFLY VINDICATED, BY WAY OF DILEMMA.

And Jesus said unto them, come ye after me, and I will make you become Fishers of Men.—Mark, i. 17.

PHILADELPHIA.

E. CUMMISKEY—SOUTH SIXTH STREET.

1837.

"A Net for the Fishers of Men," is an interesting little work, and recommended to those who may desire to arrive at truth by a process of easy and clear reasoning.

† Francis Patrick Kenrick,
Bp. of Arath, and Coadj. Bp. Philada.

Phila. May 29th, 1837.

TO THE

HOLY WISDOM

OF THE

GLORIOUS TRINITY.

Blessed, Everliving, Wisdom, Excellent and Supreme Intelligence; behold us prostrate before the majesty of your great and divine light, to offer up the homage of our persons and book; humbly acknowledging the nothingness both of the one and of the other; and with all the powers of our souls, protesting to have neither spirit nor pen, which is not of you, and from you, who art the source of all good thoughts and accomplishment of all honourable and praise-worthy discourses.

TO THE READER.

Sacred writ informs us, that in the primitive times our blessed Saviour, beginning to lay the foundation of his holy Church, called *fishermen* to the apostleship, and to those he gave a *net*, which was the wisdom and knowledge of the eternal Father, suitable for taking such fish as swim in the ocean of *infidelity*, *apostacy*, *heresy*, and *schism*. The apostles, after experiencing the good that did redound to the world by the special benefit of this *net*, and the many souls that were caught therein, would not prejudice the Church, in robbing her of so magnificent a gift; but buried the same in the bowels of holy scripture, where we, (illuminated by the Father of Light) finding so precious a treasure, thought fit to present unto you, courteous Reader, as a pledge of our affectionate respects, in being the only motive of our conversions; hoping, if perused with no more passion, prejudice, or interest, than we did, who had as great an aversion against the *Catholic Church* as you, or any other can have, that it may produce the same effects in your heart as it has in ours.

If you acknowledge yourself to be convinced in all points saving these which we omitted for brevity sake, (*viz.*) the unbloody Sacrifice of the *Mass*, *Communion* under one kind, the works of supererogation, &c. we hope to go victorious out of the field.

But if any will undertake to answer this little Treatise, he shall be the instrument not only of our recantation, but of many more.

We, with all Christian sincerity, desire that if you can resolve the following *queries*, you would annex your answer thereunto; if not, we pray the divine Majesty, of his infinite mercy, to illuminate you with the beams of his holy and saving grace, which shall ever be the prayers of your well-wishers in Christ.

FAREWELL.

A NET FOR THE FISHERS OF MEN.

1. God hath a true Church in the world, or he hath not; if not, then Christ left man without a *medium* to salvation; if he hath, yours is that true Church, or it is not; if not, then yours is not the true Christian Church; if it be, then your Church must have these following marks, viz: *visibility*, *unity*, *universality*, and *sanctity*, which the scriptures teach to be the signs of Christ's immaculate spouse.

Visibility, *demonstrated by a Mark of the true Church.*

2. The house of our Lord shall be prepared on the top of mountains, or it shall not; if it be, why then do you deny that the Church may be always visible? If not, why do you not deny that of *Isa.* ii. 2. "The mountain of the house of our Lord shall be prepared on the top of mountains?"

3. A city seated on a hill can either be hid, or not; if it can, why does our Savionr say, *St. Matt.* v. 14. "that a city seated on a hill cannot be hid?" If not; then the Church cannot be invisible.

4. Christ either founded a Church on earth, that all nations may be edified therein, or he did not; if not, why do you not deny that of *Isa.* ii. 2. "All nations shall flow unto her?" And again, *Psal.* lxxxv. 9. "All nations whatsoever thou hast made shall come and adore before thee?" If he did, why then do you say the Church may be invisible, since all nations cannot be edified in a Church unseen?

5. A man for not hearing the Church, is termed in scripture an *heathen* and a *publican*, or not; if not, why then do you not reform these words of *St. Matt.* xviii. 17. "He that will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as an heathen and a publican?" If he be, how then shall a man be termed an *heathen* for not hearing a Church that was not visible, or yet extant in the world?

Unity, *demonstrated by a Mark of the true Church.*

6. A natural unity and connection of the parts amongst themselves, and to the head, is necessary for the conservation of the natural body, or not; if not, how can a natural body subsist, if the parts be divided, and torn one from another from the head? If it be, why is that natural connection proper to a natural body, and not a spiritual body.

7. Christ promised that there should be Unity in his Church, or he did not; if not, why do you deny that of *St. John* x. 16. "There shall be made one fold and one pastor?" If he did, why do you deny unity?

8. Unity is either requisite in God's Church, or not; if not, why do you deny that of *St. John* xviii. 11. "Christ prayed that his disciples should be one?" And again, 1 *Cor.* i. 10. "I beseech you that you all speak one and the same thing, and that there be no schisms among you, but that you be perfect in one sense, and in one judgement?" If she be, why do you deny the necessity of Unity?

9. Christ when he prayed, his prayer took

effect, or it did not; if not, he in vain prayed that his disciples should be one; if it did, then Christ's people are one.

UNIVERSALITY, *demonstrated to be a Mark of the true Church.*

10. To be universal or co-existent with time and place, is a Mark of the true Church, or it is not; if not, why does the scripture say in *St. Matt.* xxviii. 19. 20. "Go ye, teach all nations, &c." "And behold I am with you even to the consummation of the world?" And again, *Eph.* iv. 11. 12. "He gave some apostles, &c. to the consummation of the saints?" If it be so, why do you reject so evident a Mark of the true Church?

11. The Church of God is either universal, or co-existent with all time, or it is not; if not, why do you not deny that of *St. John* xiv. 16. "The Paraclete shall abide with you forever?" And again, that of *St. Luke* i. 32. 33. "He (Christ) shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end?" If it be so, why do you deny *Universality?*

12. Christ's Church is universal or co-existent with all place, or it is not; if not, how can that of the *prophet* be true, "Their sound went over all the earth?" or how can all nations be taught? If it be true, why do you deny *Universality?*

13. The Church of Christ either is *Universal* or *Catholic*, or it is not, if not, why do you not deny the *Apostles' Creed?* if it be, why then do you renounce *Universality?*

SANCTITY, *demonstrated to be a Mark of the true Church.*

14. The Church of Christ is eminent for *sanctity* of discipline and doctrine, or it is not; if not, why do you not deny the *Apostles' Creed*, which says, "I believe in the holy Catholic Church?" And again, that of *Eph.* v. 26. 27. "Christ gave himself for his Church, cleansing her by the laver of water in the word, that he might present her to himself a glorious Church, not having spot nor wrinkle; but that she might be holy and unspotted?" If she be so, why do you deny *Sanctity* in the Church?

15. The Church of Christ is either sanctified, or she is not; if not, why do you not contradict *St. Paul*, saying, 1 *Cor.* vi. 11. "These things ye were, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in the spirit of our God?" If she be, why do you deny *Sanctity* in the Church?

16. The Church of Christ is manifested to be holy by the grace of miracles, or she is not; if not, why did Christ say in *St. John* xiv. 12. "He that believes in me, the works that I do he shall do, and greater?" If it be so, why do you sacrilegiously rob the Church of *Sanctity*, seeing Christ granted her the grace of miracles which we prove thus?

17. Christ either granted true believers the grace of casting out devils, and by the imposition of hands to cure the sick, or he did not; if not, why do you believe the scriptures, *Mark*, xvi. 17. 18. "Those that believe in

me, these signs will follow them; in my name they shall cast out devils,—they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall be whole?" If he did so, you cannot deny the grace of miracles in the Church.

18. Your Church hath these above-mentioned Marks, or it hath not; if not, then she is false; if she hath, answer to these following *queries.*

19. Your Church hath been apparent and visible ever since Christ, or it hath not; if not, then she is false; if she hath, prove your lawful and uninterrupted succession of pastors from the time of the Apostles till *Martin Luther* and *John Calvin.*

20. Your Church either appeared before *Luther* and *Calvin*, or it did not; if not, then she is false; if she did, in what kingdom or nation was your doctrine preached, or by whom?

21. *Martin Luther* and *John Calvin* were the first founders of your Church, or they were not; if not, produce any that ever professed the same articles with you before them; if they were, then your Church is false.

22. *Luther* and *Calvin* either separated themselves from the world, or they did not: if not, who joined with them, or to whom did they adhere? if they did, then they departed from the visible Christian religion.

23. Your Church either hath unity, or it hath not; if not, then she is not the true Church of Christ; if she hath, why is there so many *schisms* and *sects* among you?

24. All your *reformers* either agreed in matters of faith, or they did not; if not, then your pretended *reformation* had no unity; if they did, why did they so much differ in most essential points, as we prove thus.

25. *Luther* and *Calvin* were true *reformers*, or they were not; if not, then you follow false *reformers*; if they were, why did they differ in the most essential point of the holy sacrament? And again, in the government of the Church?

26. All your *reformations* either do agree, or they do not; if not, then they are false, and void of the essential point of unity; if they do, produce any two that agree in all points.

27. Your Church either is universal, or it is not; if not, then she is not the *Catholic Church;* if she be, shew one of your preachers in *Japan*, nay, or in the kingdom of *Spain.*

28. Your Church either hath converted nations, or it hath not; if not, how can she be universal? if she hath, shew one nation that she hath ever converted.

29. Your Church has either been universal, or it has not; if not, then she cannot be the true Church; if she hath, at what time has she been co-existent before *Luther* and *Calvin?*

30. Your Church has either been universal in place, or it hath not; if not, then she is not the true Church; if she has, in what place or station did she appear before *Luther* and *Calvin?*

31. Your Church hath sanctity, or it hath not; if not, then she is not the *holy Catholic*

Church; if she hath, shew one of your sect that ever was canonized.

32. *Luther*, *Calvin*, and the rest of your *reformers* confirmed their doctrine with miracles, or they did not; if they did not, then they were not true apostles; if they did, shew one of their miracles.

33. The signs which Christ foretold in scripture, followed your pretended *reformers*, or they did not; if they did not, then they were not true believers; if they did, shew one man they dispossessed, or one sick that they restored to health.

34. Your *reformers* were either famous for their virtuous lives, or they were not; if not, then they had not sanctity; if they were, why did they break their vows made to God, and teach men so to do?

35. The *Roman Catholic Church*, and no other, stands firm, and infallible against all tempests of *apostacy*, *heresy*, and *schism*, which we prove thus.

36. The *Romans* had once the true Church, or they had not; if not, then you must deny the words of scripture, *Rom.* i. 8. "First I thank my Lord through Jesus Christ, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world:" And again, v. 7. "To all that be in Rome beloved of God, called to be saints, grace to you and peace, &c." If they had, they retain the same faith still infallibly, or do not; if they do, then we agree; if not, they must have had their fall, either by *apostacy*, *heresy*, or *schism*, to the contrary.

37. The ancient *Apostolic Catholic Roman Church* fell by *apostacy*, or it did not; if not, then she is free from *apostacy;* if she did, I must desire you to inform me, when and where it was that she renounced the holy name of *Jesus.*

38. The ancient *Catholic Roman Church* fell by *heresy*, or it did not, if not, then she is free from all *heresy*; if she did, by what general council was she ever condemned? Which of the Fathers ever wrote against her? Or by what authority was she otherwise reproved?

39. The ancient *Catholic Roman Church* fell by *schism*, and by dividing herself from some other church, or it did not; if not, then she is not guilty of *schism;* if she did, whose company did she leave? From what body did she go forth? Where was the true church she forsook?

40. The true *holy Apostolic Catholic Church* is fallible, and can err, or it cannot; if not, why do you falsely condemn her? If she be, how can that of scripture be true, 1 *Tim.* iii. 15. "The house of God, which is the church of the living God, is the pillar and ground of truth?"

41. The Church of God is infallible in all her proposals and definitions of faith, or she is not; if not, why should a man be esteemed an heathen and a publican for not hearing a false and erroneous Church, *Matt.* xviii. 17? If she be, why do you deny her *infallibility?*

42. Christ being the *head of the Church*, and the Holy Ghost the soul of the Church,

guiding and directing the Church in all truth, she can err, or she cannot; if not, then she is not fallible; if she can, then Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost are her directors into errors, *John* xvi. 13.

43. Christ is either a true prophet, or he is not: if not, there is an end of Christian faith; if he be, how can the gates of hell ever prevail against the Church, seeing that he prophesied, *St. Matt.* xvi. 18. "The gates of hell shall not prevail against her?"

44. The Holy Ghost suggesteth all truth to the Church, or he doth not; if not, why do you believe that of *St. John* xiv. 26. "He shall teach you all things, whatsoever I shall say unto you?" If he doth so, then he will suggest no errors, &c.

45. Christ was a wise man, or he was not; if wise, he did not build his house upon the sand, and make it subject to the infernal tempests: if not, why is he styled the wisdom of the Father?

46. A congregation of people in despising Christ, are guilty of apostacy, or they are not; if not, you must give me a new definition of apostacy; if they be, how can you clear yourselves of apostacy in despising his Church, seeing it is said in scripture, *Luke* x. 16. "He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth me, and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me?"

47. Your Church is guilty of *Heresy*, or it is not; if she be, &c. if not, how should the definition of *Heresy* agree with you, in adhering

to so many private and singular opinions and errors of faith, contrary to the general approved doctrine of the *Catholic Church.*

48. Your Church is guilty of *Schism*, or it is not; if she be not, how should the definition of *Schism* agree with you in dividing yourselves from the body of all faithful Christians, and in breaking off communion with the ancient *Apostolical Catholic Roman Church?*

49. That Church to which the above-mentioned marks agree (to wit) *Apostacy*, *Heresy*, and *Schism*, is a false Church, or it is not; if not, then you do not esteem *Apostacy*, *Heresy*, and *Schism*, to be marks of a false Church; if they be, then your Church is false, erroneous, and no Church, seeing they so aptly agree with you.

50. All that the ancient, *Holy*, *Catholic Roman Church* holds as articles of faith, are pious, good, and lawful, which we prove thus out of Holy Writ, and by common sense and reason.

THE POPE'S SUPREMACY, *vindicated by the most solid Texts of Scripture.*

51. THE foundation of the Church of God next after Christ, was built on *St. Peter*, or it was not; if not, why doth the scripture say, *Matt.* xvi. 18. "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church?" If it was, why do you deny *Peter's* Supremacy?

52. Christ did prefer *Peter* before the other apostles, or he did not; if not, why did he say to *Peter* only, *John* xxi. 15. 16. 17. "Feed

my Lambs, Feed my Sheep?" If he did, why do you deny *Peter's* Supremacy?

53. The apostles were of equal authority, or they were not; if not, why do you deny *Peter's* Supremacy? if they were, why have you *Primates*, *Archbishops*, *Bishops*, and no equal authority as they had?

54. He to whom the chief charge of feeding Christ's sheep was given, was chief of the apostles, or he was not; if not, why was the chief charge given to him? if he was, why do you deny *Peter's* Supremacy to whom the chief charge was committed?

ORAL AND APOSTOLICAL TRADITION, *vindicated by the most solid Texts of Scripture.*

55. ORAL *and Apostolical Tradition* (without written books) either was the means of planting the Christian religion, or it was not; if not, how did the apostles propagate the faith of Christ without written books? if it was, why do you deny *Oral* and *Apostolical Tradition?*

56. The number of the canonical books are mentioned in scripture, or they are not; if not, how do you know the canonical books, but by *Oral Tradition?* if they be, in what book, chapter, or verse, doth it appear?

57. The Christians of the primitive age, on pain of damnation, held nothing for faith, but what they received from Christ and his apostles for such, or else they did not; if not, why did *St. Paul* say, *Gal.* i. 18. "Although we, or an angel from heaven, preach to you besides that which we have preached to you, be he

Anathema?" And again, 2 *Thess.* xv. "Therefore, Brethren stand ye fast, and hold ye the Traditions which ye have learned, whether by word, or by epistle?" If they did, why do you deny Tradition?

58. Apostolical Tradition is the rule by which we may infallibly be assured, both of what doctrine Christ and his apostles taught, and what books they wrote, or else not; if not, how otherwise can we be assured? If it be, why do you deny Apostolical Tradition?

THE BLESSED EUCHARIST, *vindicated to be the most precious Body and Blood of our Saviour, by the most solid Texts of Scripture.*

59. THAT Natural Body and Blood which *Christ* offered for the remission of sins on the *Cross*, was the same that *Christ* gave to his apostles at his last supper, or else it was not; if not, why did our blessed Saviour say so expressly, *Luke* xxii. 19. "This is my Body which is given for you?" And again, *Matt.* xxiv. 28. "This is my Blood of the New-Testament, which shall be shed for many, unto remission of sins?" If it be, why do you deny the Real Presence in the *Eucharist?*

60. Christ either gave his Body and Blood to his apostles at his last supper, or he did not; if not, then you make Christ a liar, and the Scriptures false; if he did, why do you deny the Real Presence?

61. When Christ said, "*This is my Body*," did he speak metaphorically, or not? If not,

why do you deny the Real Presence? If he did, prove the metaphor out of scripture.

62. The blessed body of Christ, not being contained in the bread, can be eaten, or it cannot; if not, why do you maintain that you eat the body that is not contained in the bread? If it can, doth it not imply a great contradiction, seeing you hold the body is eaten in the *Eucharist*, and is not in the *Eucharist?*

THE LITURGY IN AN UNKNOWN TONGUE, *vindicated by the most solid Texts of Scripture.*

63. THAT which the apostles practised is either lawful for us to practise, or it is not; if not, then you accuse the apostles of doing that which was not lawful; if it be, why do you deny the lawfulness of the *Liturgy in an unknown tongue*, seeing that the apostles had their public *Liturgies in Greek, Syriac*, and *Latin*, as is manifest in history?

64. Seeing God hath commanded nothing concerning the language of the public Liturgy, we ought either to follow the commands of the Church, or we ought not; if not, why do you not deny that of *St. Matt.* xviii. 17. "If he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as an heathen and a publican?" if it be, why then do you deny the Liturgy in an unknown tongue, seeing the Church commands the same?

65. The man that prays and gives thanks in an unknown tongue, either doth well, or he doth not; if not, why do you not condemn that of scripture, 1 *Cor.* xiv. 17. "Thou in-

deed givest thanks well, but the other is not edified? if he doth, why do you condemn the Liturgy in an unknown tongue?

66. That which is praised in the scripture, and proved to be pleasing to God, either is lawful and expedient for us to practise, or it is not; if not, then the scriptures contain unlawful and unnecessary things; if it be, why do you deny the *Liturgy* in an unknown tongue, seeing the apostle says, 1 *Cor.* xiv. 2. "He that speaketh in a tongue, speaketh not unto men, but unto God?" And again v. 14. "If I pray in a tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is without fruit?" and finally v. 39. "Forbid not to speak with tongues."

SACRAMENTAL CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION, *vindicated to be pious, good and lawful, by the most solid Texts of Scripture.*

67. THE apostles being made spiritual judges by Christ our Lord, had power from him to bind and loose from sin, or they had not; if not, why did Jesus Christ declare, *Matt.* xxviii. 18. "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed also in heaven?" If they had, why do you reject *Absolution?*

68. The Laity either are obliged to disclose their faults to their judges, or they are not; if not, how can they *absolve* them from what they know not? if they be, why then do you deny Confession of Sins?

69. *Christ* in speaking these words, *John* xx. 23. "Whose sins ye shall forgive, they

are forgiven, and whose sins ye shall retain, they are retained," spoke true or false; if false, then you condemn the Author of Truth; if true, why do you deny the power of Absolution?

70. That which the Scripture commands, either is necessary, or it is not; if not, then the Scriptures command unnecessary things; if it be, why do you deny that of *St. James* v. 16. "Confess therefore your sins one to another?"

PURGATORY, *vindicated by the most solid Texts of Scripture.*

71. There is a penal prison, or place of temporal punishment and payment after this life, or there is not; if not, how shall we understand that of scripture, *Zach.* ix. 11. "Thou also by the Blood of thy Testament hath sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein there is no water?" And again, *Mal.* iii. "He shall sit refining and shall purify the Sons of Levi?" And again, 1 *Cor.* iii. 13. "Every man's work shall be manifest: for the day of the Lord shall declare it, because it shall be revealed in fire: and the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is. If any man's works abide, which he hath built thereon, he shall receive a reward; if any one's work burn, he shall suffer loss, but himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire?" And finally, *Matt.* v. 25. "Be at agreement with thy adversary betimes, whilst thou art in the way with him; lest perhaps the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge to the jailer, and thou be cast into prison. Amen, I say to thee, thou shalt not go out from thence, till thou repay the last

farthing?" If there be, why do you deny *Purgatory?*

72. Those souls which our blessed Saviour and his apostles raised from death, they were either in heaven or hell, or they were not; if not, why then do you deny a third place? if they were, how could they return to mortality?

73. Christ's descension either was into the hell of the damned, or it was not; if it was not, then it was in the third place; if you say it was, then you blaspheme.

74. When Christ preached to the Souls in prison, 1 *Pet.* iii. 19. it was either to the damned, or it was not; if not, then it was to the souls in *Purgatory;* if you say it was to the damned, then you would have Christ to preach in vain, seeing out of hell there is no redemption.

MORTAL AND VENIAL SINS, *vindicated by the most solid Texts of Scripture.*

75. ALL kinds of sin either rob the soul of justice, and make her guilty of damnation, or they do not; if not, then some sins are only *venial;* if they do, why then doth Christ make three different sorts of sin, of which the least renders a man guilty of damnation? *Matt.* v. 22. "Whoever shall be angry with his brother, shall be in danger of judgment; whosoever shall say to his brother *Raca*, shall be in danger of the council; and whosoever shall say, thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."

76. All sins are either mortal, and sufficient to break charity betwixt God and man, or they

are not; if not, then there must be some *Venial*, and not sufficient to break charity betwixt God and man; if they be, then the Apostles themselves are not in charity with God, seeing it is said in *St. James* iii. 2. "In many things we all offend."

77. All idle words either are *mortal sins*, or they are not; if not, then there must be some *Venial;* if there be, how can any hope for Salvation, seeing no man (morally speaking) can avoid idle words.

78. All sins are even unto death, or they are not; if not, then there are some *Venial*; if they be, then you make *St. John* a liar, who said, "There is a sin unto death, and a sin not unto death." 2 *John* v. 66.

THE INVOCATION OF ANGELS AND SAINTS *vindicated by the most solid Texts of Scripture.*

79. The enjoyment of God, Angels and Saints, and the Glory of heaven, either robs men of their knowledge, or it does not; if it doth, you make our celestial life to be far inferior to our terrestrial in matters of knowledge; if not, why do you deny; that prophets now in heaven, can know things at a distance as well as they did on earth? 1 *Kings* vi. 13. *Eliseus*, by the special light of grace only, saw what was done in the King of *Syria's* private chamber; and again 2 *King's* v. And what passed betwixt his servant *Gehezi* and *Naaman*, when he was absent. *St. Peter* likewise knew the sacrilegious act of *Ananias*

and *Saphira*, though acted privately betwixt themselves.

80. The damned spirits of hell either know more than the blessed souls in the glory of the Father, or they do not; if not, why do you acknowledge the devils to understand our most secret thoughts and prayers, and not the angels also? If they do, then more knowledge is allowed to them in perdition, than to the immaculate Saints in eternal bliss.

81. The Angels of God have ever prayed for those on earth, or they have not; if not, why do we read in the prophet, *Zach.* i. 12. "The angel of our Lord answered and said, O Lord of Hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem, and on the cities of Juda?" If they have why do you not agree with us, that the angels pray for us?

82. It is either lawful to pray to angels, or it is not; if it be, then the Invocation of angels is not vain; if not, you must accuse *Jacob* of an error, in invocating the angel to bless his children, *Gen.* xlvii. 16. And again, *Job* v. 1. "Call now, if there be any that will answer thee, (*saith* Eliphaz *to* Job) and turn to some of the Saints:" and again, *Osee* xii. 4. "Jacob prevailed over the Angel, and wept and made supplication to him."

THE WORSHIPPING OF ANGELS AND HOLY IMAGES, *vindicated by the most solid Texts of Scripture.*

83. When *St. John* in the *Apoc.* xxii. 8. fell down to adore before the feet of the angel, he either knew it was lawful, or he did not; if

not, then the most wise and excellent prophet, apostle, and evangelist, was guilty of gross ignorance, and wilful idolatry; if he did, why was it lawful to him and not to us? And again, *Gen.* xix. 1. When *Lot* adored the Angel with his face bowed towards the earth, he either committed Idolatry, or he did not; if not, then the worship of Angels is lawful; if he did then you accuse him of more than the Scripture doth.

84. All that is recorded in Holy Writ to have been done by the known saints of God, without reproof, is either lawful, or it is not; if not, why did the great Precurser of Christ, *St. John* the *Baptist*, worship the very latchets of our Saviours's shoes? And again, why did *Jacob* worship the top of *Joseph's* rod, *Heb.* xi. 21? If it be so, why do you call the worship of Images Idolatry?

85. The holy Veneration and Worship of Images have either profited the *Jews* and *Christians*, or they have not; if not, how were the *Israelites* healed of the biting of the serpents in the desert? And again how did the *Primitive Christians* receive special benefit by venerating the shadow and garments of *St. Peter* and *St. Paul*, *Acts* vi. 15. and xix. 12? If probable then, why not now also?

86. Is it lawful to bow the knee to images, or is it not? if not, why doth the apostle say, at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, *Phil.* ii. 10? which name is nothing but an image of the hearing; if it be, why do you reject the Veneration of sacred Images?

THE VENERATION OF RELICKS, *vindicated by the most solid Texts of Scripture.*

87. The Honour and Veneration of the Relicks of Saints, which God himself hath approved by many famous miracles, is either good, or it is not; if not, why doth God set his seal on *miracles* to confirm a lie? if it be, why do you condemn the Veneration of Relicks?

88. The woman, who was miraculously cured of her bloody flux by only touching the hem of Christ's garment, was cured either for venerating the relicks or she was not; if by *Faith* why was she not cured at a distance, without touching the garment, *Mat.* ix. 20? If she was, why do you slight the Veneration of sacred Relicks?

89. The virtue of casting out devils, and curing the diseased, consisted in the napkins and handkerchiefs, that had but touched the body of *St. Paul*, *Acts* xix. 12. or it did not; if not, why did they not cure them without touching the apostles? If it did, why do you deny the Veneration of Relicks?

90. The bones of dead Saints have either restored men to life, or they have not; if not, you must deny the Miracle of *Eliseus's* bones, 4 *Kings* xiii. 21. if they did, then the Relicks and Bones of Saints are worthy of Veneration.

FREE-WILL *vindicated by the most solid Texts of Scripture.*

91. God either left man to his own Free-will, or he did not; if not, why does the Scrip-

ture say, *Eccles.*. xv. 14. "God made man from the beginning, and left him in the hands of his own council?" If he did why do you deny *Free-will.*

92. The choice of good and evil, is either left in man's Free-will, or it is not; if not, why do you not deny that of *Josh.* xxiv. "You have your choice, choose this day that which pleaseth you?" And again, *John* i. 12. "But as many as received him (Christ) he gave them power to be made the sons of God? If it be why do you deny *Free-will?*

93. Man hath power either to keep his Virgin, or he hath not; if not, why doth the Scriptures say, 1 *Cor.* vii. 37, "He that hath determined being steadfast in his heart, having no necessity, but having power of his own will to keep his Virgin doth well?" If he hath, why do ye deny Free-will?

94. All that God commands is either in Man's free power, or it is not, if not, why do you not condemn God of tyranny, in commanding that which is not in Man's free power to do? as if I should threaten my servant with a horrible death, for not bringing me the Man in the Moon; if it be, why do you deny Free-will?

FAITH WITHOUT WORKS *proved to be of no Effect, by the most solid Texts of Holy Writ.*

95. FAITH working by charity, either justifies or it does not; if not, you must condemn what *St. Paul* says, *Gal.* v. 6. "For in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth

any thing nor uncircumcision, but faith working by charity;" if it does, then your justifying faith flies without wings.

96. A man only saying, *Lord, Lord,* either may be saved, or he may not, if not then where is your justifying faith? If he may once more you confound the scriptures, *Matt.* vii. 21. "Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, but he that doth the will of my Father shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.

97. You either hope to be saved by believing in God only without works, or you do not; if not, then your justifying Faith is vain; if you do, why may not the damned spirits expect salvation, seeing they believe in God, and tremble also?

THE MERIT OF WORKS *vindicated by the most solid Texts of Scripture.*

98. Every man will either be rewarded at the last day, according to his works, or he will not; if not, then you accuse God of injustice, in not rendering to each man according to his works; if he will, then good works are meritorious, and will receive a good reward.

99. Christ either encouraged his apostles to suffer afflictions patiently, in expectation of a reward, or he did not; if not, why did he say, *Matt.* v. 11. 12. "Blessed are ye when they shall revile you and persecute you for my sake; be glad and rejoice; for your reward is very great in heaven?" If he did why were not their persecutions meritorious: and consequently our good works?

100. That crown of justice which *St. Paul* said was laid up for himself, was either the reward of his good fight, or it was not; if not, how can you reconcile with truth that of 2 *Tim.* iv. 7. 8. "I have faught a good fight, there is laid up for me a crown of justice, which the Lord, a just judge will render to me in that day, &c" If it was, how can you deny the merit of good Works?

101. A cup of cold water given in the name of a disciple, is either meritorious, or it is not; if not, why is it said in *Matt.* x. 42. "Whosoever shall give to drink to one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, Amen, I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward?" If it be, why do you arrogantly deny the merit of good Works?

HOLY AND RELIGIOUS VOWS *vindicated by the most solid Texts of Scripture.*

102. The sacred Vows which are taught us in the holy scripture, are either lawful, or they are not; if not, why do the scriptures say, *Isa.* xix. 21. "They shall make vows to the Lord, and perform them." And *Psalm* lxxv. 12 "Vow ye, and pray to the Lord your God?" And again, *Psal.* cxxxii. 2. "David vowed a vow to the God of Jacob." Here David either vowed lawfully, or he did not; if not, then ye convict the prophet of the Most High in a wilful error; if he did, why was a *vow* lawful to him and not to us?

103. The greatest perfection of a Christian's life consists either in evangelical poverty, or

it does not, if not, why did our Saviour, in *Matt.* xix. 21. say unto the young man, "If thou wilt be perfect, go, and sell all what thou hast, and give to the poor, and follow me, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven?" If it be, why do you reject the vow of poverty as a human invention?

104. It either was a virtue in *eunuchs*, who made themselves *eunuchs* for the kingdom of heaven, or it was not; if not you condemn that of *St. Matt.* xix. 12. "There are *eunuchs*, who have made themselves *eunuchs* for the kingdom of heaven," which pious action our Saviour himself did not reprove: we yet insist He who resolves in his heart to keep his virgin, either doth well, or he does not; if not, you deny that in 1 *Cor.* vii. 37, 38. "He that hath resolved in his heart, &c. to keep his virgin doth well," and if he doth why do you condemn the holy vow of chastity?

105. We ought either to obey our prelates and superiors, or we ought not, then you deny that of *Heb.* xiii. 17. "Obey your prelates, and be subject to them?" If we ought, why do you reject the vow of obedience as a Popish Fiction? And again, in *Luke* ii. 51. our Saviour, in obedience to the blessed Virgin and *St. Joseph*, either gave us an example of obedience, or he did not; if not, why did he subject himself unto them by a *voluntary subjection*? If he did, then the vow of obedience is evidently a pious action by the example of Christ himself.

THE POSSIBILITY OF KEEPING THE COMMANDMENTS *vindicated by the most solid Texts of Scripture.*

106. A Man, being assisted by the special grace of God, can either keep the Commandments of God, or he cannot; if not, you make God a tyrant, in commanding us that which he himself cannot enable us to perform; if he can, why do you deny the possibility of keeping the commandments?

107. It is either possible with man to keep the commandments or it is not; if not, why did *John* say, "He who saith he knoweth God, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him?" If it be, why do you falsely accuse God of commanding impossibilities? We insist further, hearers of the law only are justified; or they are not, if not then the fulfilling of them is necessary to our justification? if they be, then you falsify that of *Rom.* ii. 13. "Not the hearers of the law, are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified."

108. God (according to his promise) enabled man by his holy spirit, either to keep his commandments or he did not; if not, you deny that promise made in *Ezek.* xxxvi. 27. "I will put my spirit in the midst of you: and I will cause you to walk in my commandments, and to keep my judgments and do them." Again, *Ezk.* xxxvii. 23, 24. "They shall be my people &c. They shall walk in my judgments, and shall keep my commandments;" if he did, why do you deny in man

the possibility of keeping the commandments?

109. It is evident in holy writ, that some either keep the Commandments, *de facto*, or they do not, why do you believe that of *St. Luke* i. 6. "Zachariah and Elizabeth were both just before God, walking in all the commandments, and justifications, without blame?" If it be, why do you deny the possibility of keeping the commandments?

THE INSTITUTION OF THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS IN CHRIST'S CHURCH *vindicated by the most solid Texts of Scripture.*

110. CHRIST, for the sanctification of mankind, either instituted seven visible signs of invisible graces, or else he did not; if he did, then there are seven Sacraments; if not, then let our adversaries satisfy us to the following propositions, *viz. Baptism* is either a Sacrament, or it is not; if it be, then we agree; if not, why then hath it the *visible signs* (viz.) the words and water of an invisible grace, according to *St. John* iii. 5. "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God? And again, *Gal.* iii. 27. "As many of you as have been baptized in Christ, have put on Christ?

111. *Confirmation* either is a Sacrament or it is not; if it be, then we agree; if not, why hath it the *visible sign* (*viz.*) the oil and balm of an *invisible grace*, according to *Acts* xix. 5, 6. "Having heard these things, they &c. And when Paul had imposed his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came upon them?"

Again, *Acts* viii. 14, 15, 17. "*St. Peter* and *St. John* laid their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost?"

112. The *Eucharist* either is a Sacrament, or it is not; if it be, the controversy is ended; if not, why hath it *visible signs*, (*viz.*) the accidents of bread and wine, of an invisible grace, according to that of 1 *Cor.* xi. 17, 26, 27. "This is my blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many, to the remission of sins? And *St. John* vi. 54. "Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you?"

113. *Penance* either is a Sacrament, or it is not; if it be, then we agree; if not, why hath it the *visible signs* (*viz.*) the penitent's confession, and the priests absolution of an invisible grace, which is the remission of sins, according to *John* xx. 23. "Whose sins you shall retain, they are retained; and whose sins ye shall forgive they are forgiven?"

114. *Extreme Unction* either is a Sacrament, or it is not; if it be, then there is more than two Sacraments; if not why then hath it the *visible sign* (*viz.*) the priest's prayer, and the anointing with oil of an invisible grace; whereof *St. James* speaks in chap. v. 14, 15. "Is any man sick among you, let him bring in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith shall save the sick man: and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him?"

115. *Holy Order* either is a Sacrament, or it is not; if it be, then it is no vacant ceremony; if not, why then hath it the *visible sign* (*viz.*) the words of the Bishop, and the things given to him that is ordained, of an invisible grace, according to 1 *Tim.* iv. 14. "Neglect not the grace that is in thee by prophecy with imposition of the hands of the priesthood?

116. *Matrimony* either is a Sacrament, or it is not; if it be, then it is not a mere ceremony of the Popish Church; if not, why then hath it a *visible sign* (*viz.*) the mutual consent of both parties of an invisible grace, and supernatural conjunction, made by Almighty God, *Matt.* xix. 6. "What therefore which God hath joined together, let no man put asunder?" And again, *Eph.* v. 31, 32. "They shall be two in one flesh," this is a great sacrament but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.

117. A *visible sign* of an *invisible grace*, divinely instituted by Christ, either is a true definiton of a sacrament, or it is not; if not, then you deny the definition which yourselves attribute to a sacrament; if it be how can you deny the above mentioned seven visible signs of invisible grace, divinely instituted by Christ, to be sacraments?

118. *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*, is either more evidently said in Scripture, than any of the other five, to be sacraments, or they are not; if not, why then do you hold these two only, and none of the other five, to be sacraments? If they be, then show us in

what book, chapter, or verse, is *Baptism* and the *Lords Supper* said to be sacraments, and none of the other five which you so obstinately deny.

THE APPENDIX.

That the sectaries of our times have no lawful or continued succession we prove thus:

119. Your Church either hath its succession from the undernamed sects, or it hath not; if not, then you cannot have your succession from any other visible in the world, since *Gregory the Great*, about whose time you hold the Romish church fell from her purity; if she hath, why do not you profess the Articles with the undernamed sects, (*viz.*) with the Waldenses, that laymen and women may consecrate and preach; that clergymen ought to have no possessions or properties; and that oaths were unlawful in all cases; &c. which absurdities were condemned by the 3d Lateran council, in the twelfth century with Abbot Joachim, who denied the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to be one, highest thing, essence or nature, though three distinct persons, Can. 3. which heresy was condemned by the 4th Lateran council, in the 13th century; with Bergades and Beguines, who held carnal lust, done out of temptation to be no sin, &c. which absurdity was condemned by the council of Vienna in the 14th century; with John Husse,

John Wickliffe, Jerome of Prague; that all priests and magistrates, who fell from their dignity by any mortal sin, ought no longer to be obeyed; that God must obey the Devil, and that temporal lords might take away church-livings at their pleasure, &c. which absurdities were totally condemned by the council of Constance, in the fifteenth century. Your Church either had her succession from the above-mentioned sects or it had not; if she have, then you must retain the same most ridiculous tenets with the above mentioned sectaries; if not then you must have no succession, unless it be from the ancient Roman Catholic Church?

(On the contrary.)

120. Luther and Calvin either had their mission from the Roman Church, or they had not; if not, then they had no mission; if they had, the Roman Church either had the spirit of God, when she gave them their mission, or she had not; if not, how could she give them lawful mission, not having the spirit of God? If she had, how could she fall into errors, and why did they depart from the spirit of God? We insist further; either they had their mission from God, or they had not; if not, then it was from the devil; if they had why do they not confirm their doctrine with miracles, as God did the unwritten law, Moses the written law, and Christ Jesus the new law.

121. Luther and Calvin's doctrine either was manifested to be true by miracles, or it was not; if it was by what miracle did they

ever confirm that which they preached? If not, then (seeing you cannot allege any texts of sacred writ, to vindicate their tenets) you must of necessity run to your private spirit for refuge.

(On the contrary.)

122. The Apostles either had the private spirit, or they had not, if not then it is not Apostolical, but rather Diabolical; if they had, why then did they call a Council? *Acts* xv.

123. Your private spirit either is of God, or it is not, if not, then it is of the devil; if it be of God, why then are there so many disagreeing sects amongst you?

124. A man endowed with your private spirit, either can interpret scriptures, or he cannot; if not, why doth rude and illiterate mechanics, the meanest of peasants, and in fine, all plebeians sort presume to interpret the most difficult parts of holy scripture, and distinguish the canonical books, from the apochryphal? If they can, what need have you of preachers, seeing no man will believe any thing but what his spirit suggests unto him?

EULOGIC APOSTROPHE TO THE CHURCH,

By the justly Celebrated Ffnelon.

"Oh Church of Rome? oh sacred city? oh dear and common country to all true christians? In Jesus Christ, there is neither Greek, nor Scythian, nor Barbarian, nor Jew, nor Gentile; in thy bosom, they are as one people, all are citizens of Rome; and every catholic is a Roman. Behold the mighty stem,

which has been planted by the hand of Jesus Christ! Every branch which is separated from it, fades, withers, and dies. Oh mother! whoever is a child of God; is also thy child: after the lapse of so many ages, thou art yet fruitful. Oh spouse! thou bringest forth children to thy husband, in every quarter of the globe; but whence is it that so many unnatural children now contemn their mother, arise up against her, and consider her as a cruel stepdame? Whence is it that her authority should give them such vain offence? What! shall the sacred bond of union, which should unite every one in a single flock, and make every minister as a single pastor; shall that be the pretext for a fatal dissention? shall we produce those times, which will be the last, when the Son of Man shall hardly find faith upon the earth? Let us tremble, my dearest brethren, let us tremble, lest the reign of God, which we abuse, should be taken away from us, and be given to other nations who will bear the fruits. Let us tremble, let us humble ourselves, lest Jesus Christ carry elsewhere the torch of pure faith, and leave us in that gloomy darkness which our pride has deserved. Oh church! whence Peter will forever strengthen his brethren, let my right hand forget itself, if ever I forget thee! Let my tongue cleave to my mouth and be motionless, if thou be not, to the last breath of life, the principle object of my joy and my rejoicings."

The above is taken from his Ordinance, of the 9th of June, 1714, which was the last act of his Apostolic ministry.

THE

CONVERSION

AND

EDIFYING DEATH

OF

ANDREW DUNN,

OR,

A GUIDE TO TRUTH AND PEACE.

A RELIGIOUS TALE.

Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. 1. THES. v. 21.

PHILADELPHIA.

E. CUMMISKEY—SOUTH SIXTH STREET.

1837.

"The Conversion of Andrew Dunn," is an edifying tale, admirably calculated to illustrate Catholic principles, and remove prevailing prejudices.

✝ Francis Patrick Kenrick,
Bp. of Arath, and Coadj. Bp. Philada.

Phila. May 29th, 1837.

THE

CONVERSION AND EDIFYING DEATH

OF

ANDREW DUNN.

CHAPTER I.

ANDREW'S DOUBTS, AND CONVERSATION WITH HIS MINISTER.

ANDREW DUNN was born of poor, but honest and industrious parents, by profession Protestants, and warmly attached to their persuasion. Anxious to instil the same principles into the tender mind of their son, they took him with them, as often as occasion offered, to hear sermons, both at Church, and Meeting-Houses, and carefully taught him their Catechism.

Wishing also to give him a good stock of learning, they sent him to the day school, where he was instructed in reading, writing and accounts. At the age of fifteen they took him away from school, and kept him at home, to assist them in their daily labors. His obedience to their orders, and his attention to their wants, made him extremely dear to them. Indeed he was beloved by all that knew him; for he was naturally of a mild and

amiable disposition. He was also a very good liver; he had a great horror for cursing, swearing, drunkenness and all such vices; and seemed indeed, in earnest to save his soul, by loving and serving God, in the best manner he could. He daily searched the scriptures; he frequently attended sermons: and, he always, with great docility, took for granted that every thing the Preacher told him was true. So exemplary was his conduct, that his neighbors looked upon him as a saint, and would often wish that they were like Andrew Dunn.

At the age of thirty, Andrew began to be troubled with very great *Doubts* about religion, which changed his former cheerfulness into dejection and melancholy. His friends having noticed this change, and occasionally observed him to be uncommonly serious, with his eyes often bathed in tears, at length made bold to ask the cause of his apparent trouble. "Oh! Andrew," said they, "excuse our boldness; do tell us the cause of those melancholy looks, and those floods of tears we so often witness? A life like yours, spent in the service of God, ought to be to you a source of joy, as being a *sure* token of joys that will never end. If the remembrance of your past sins causes your great grief, have confidence in the goodness of God, and in the merits of Jesus, who has bled and died for the expiation of your sins; remember that "the blood of Jesus Christ, cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John, i. 7.

Andrew after being long importuned, at length made known the cause of his uneasiness

and tears.—"I have," said he, (in the greatest anguish of mind) "I have endeavored, for many years to avoid sin, and to serve God; for I am indeed desirous, from the bottom of my heart, to save my soul; and, if I must tell you the truth, it is my great desire of salvation, that occasions all my tears; for, I cannot help feeling, at times, *Doubts* and very great *Apprehensions* on that important subject. For the Bible tells me in Prov. xiv. 12. 'that there is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the ends thereof are the ways of death.' And may not I be walking in that destructive way?"

In order to calm his fears and apprehensions, his friends told him to continue to read the Bible, and fervently to beseech the holy spirit to teach him, and to make him *wise unto salvation.* "The Bible," they said, "is the word of God; it *alone* can conduct you to the Truth;—follow what it teaches, and you need not fear the result." "Oh," said Andrew, "I have for many years practised what you recommend. I have read the Bible, almost times without number; I have read it with a *sincere* will and desire to be directed into the ways of salvation and truth; and, with fervent *prayers* and tears, I have besought the Lord to dispel my *Doubts;* but, instead of decreasing, my *Doubts* and perplexities daily increase; and that you may know that my *Doubts* and alarms are not imaginary and trifling, but real and considerable, I will now lay them with candour, before you.

"My first *Doubt* regards the sacred scriptures. I know indeed, that they contain the word of God, and therefore are infallibly true, in what they teach. But as the word of God contained in them, admits of *various* interpretations, how am I to learn the *true* interpretation? I see numbers of individuals, as wise and good as myself, giving the most *contrary* and *contradictory* interpretations to the same texts; I read too, in the scripture itself, 2 Pet. iii. 16, 'that in the Epistles of St. Paul, there are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable, wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, to their own destruction.' And, may not I be of that unhappy number? I trust, indeed, I am right, but I cannot help thinking I may be wrong.

"My second *Doubt* regards my religion. I am a Protestant; or at least so called; but if any one was to ask me why I am a Protestant, I could not tell him unless I was to say, that my father was so before me; and this, I think, a very foolish reason. Yet it is my only reason. I have not learnt it from the Bible. Though I have read the Bible through and through, I have never been able to find in it, either the xxxix articles or the ordinances of the common prayer-book. Hence, I cannot but suspect, that the Protestant religion, is not the true religion of Jesus Christ. And, I am more inclined to think so, from the numbers that are constantly leaving our Church, and going over to the Roman Catholic Church, especially on their death-beds; whilst I *never*

heard of a Roman Catholic wishing, *on his death-bed*, to become a Protestant.

"A third reason that causes me to suspect that the Protestant Church is not the true Church, is this; whenever I hear a Protestant and Catholic disputing, the Catholic *invariably*, appears to me, to be supported by the strongest arguments from the holy scriptures; whilst the Protestant seems always more disposed to *dispute against* Catholics, and to *impute to them doctrines which they do not believe*, than to defend his own doctrines. And this I observe to be the case, *particularly* with our preachers; they seldom speak of their own doctrines without misrepresenting the doctrines of Popery, calling it idolatrous, superstitious and absurd, which, you know, is a breach of the commandment of God, 'Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.' Exod. 11. xx. 16. In witnessing this their conduct, I cannot think their cause to be a good one, for, if it were, it would not require the aid of misrepresentation to uphold it.

"A fourth cause of my doubts, is, the *newness* of the Protestant Church; the *true Church of Christ*, you know, was built by the *apostles*, and has continued for eighteen hundred years; the *Protestant Church* was built by *Luther and Calvin*, about three hundred years ago. How then can the Protestant Church be the *Church of Christ*, having made its first appearance fifteen hundred years after the *time* of Christ?

"A fifth cause of my doubts, is, the ninth

article of the apostle's creed, in which I repeat, I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH, this gives me much trouble; and I can never repeat it, in the presence of God, without hearing something, within me, exclaiming THOU LIEST: And, indeed, belonging, as I do, to the *Protestant Church*, how can I say, with truth, I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH? and, if I do not, with truth, believe in the HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH, how can I be saved? Does not the creed of St. Athanasius, read at morning prayer, in the common prayer book, assure us 'that whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the CATHOLIC FAITH; which faith, except every one do keep whole, and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly? These, and a thousand other *Doubts* are daily crowding into my mind, so that I feel *very* unhappy, hoping I may be *right*, greatly fearing I may be *wrong*. But what always is uppermost in my thoughts, is, the ninth article of the apostles' creed, 'I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH:' I cannot help often exclaiming to myself, what! if *our Church* be the Catholic Church, why dont we call it the Catholic Church? why do we call it the Protestant Church? and if *our Church*, be the Church planted by the Apostles, why not call it by the name the Apostles gave it in the creed? If it be the *old* Church, why give it a *new* name?"

Andrew expressed his *Doubts*, with such a lively sense of the immense importance of sal-

vation, as to make a deep impression on the minds of all present. They acknowledged that his *Doubts* were *real*, and *alarming;* and declared that as they were equally interested, with himself, in discovering the *true Church*, they would, if they could not clear up those doubts, leave the Protestant Church. However, wishing to act with the greatest caution in an affair on which their everlasting happiness depended, they directed Andrew to go and consult their Minister, a man learned, and, of all others, as they thought, most capable of solving their doubts. Accordingly, Andrew went to the Minister, Rev. Mr. ——, and told him that he wished to have a little conversation with him on the subject of Religion. "Well Andrew," said he, "what have you to say to me?" "I have been for some years," replied Andrew, "very uneasy about my religion, I feel many *doubts* and *perplexities*, which make me very unhappy. Will you, Sir, be so kind as to satisfy my *doubts?*" "With pleasure," said he, "with pleasure, Andrew; what are they?" "Why to begin with the greatest of my *doubts*," replied Andrew, "you know from the sacred scriptures, that Jesus established a Church, or society of true believers upon earth, consisting of Pastors and People; that he founded it on a Rock, and promised that it should last for ever, that the Gates of Hell should never prevail against it, Matt. xxviii. 20. you know too, that whosoever will not hear this Church shall be as a heathen, Matt. xviii. 17; that such as are

to be saved, are daily added to this Church; Acts xi. 47; and that this Church is called by the apostles, and distinguished from all false Churches by the name of 'CATHOLIC CHURCH:' knowing this, pray Sir, is *our Church* the Catholic Church? or if it be so, why do we not call it the 'Catholic Church?'" "The reason," said the Minister, "why *our Church* is called the *Protestant Church*, is this: some hundred years ago (no one can tell when) the CATHOLIC CHURCH, or the true Church of Christ, fell into various errors; yea, according to the Book of Homilies, which is read in our Church, it fell even into damnable idolatry; about fifteen hundred years after the establishment of that Church, *Luther* a German, and *Calvin* a Frenchman, undertook to *correct* those errors, and *reform* those abuses; and in consequence of this, they and their followers, in the year one thousand five hundred and twenty-nine, took the name of *Reformers*, or *Protestors* against the old faith, or *Protestants*. So that our Church is the *reformed* '*Catholic Church*,' the *Church of Rome* is the *Roman Catholic Church*."

Andrew, after thanking kindly his Minister for his great goodness, went home, *not quite satisfied*, however, with his answer. For he could not conceive how there could be *two* Catholic Churches, for "Catholic," said he, "means universal or existing at all times and places, and how can there be two such universal Churches? Surely if there is but *one* universe, there can be but one universal Church."

Besides, he thought, if the Protestant Church be the reformed and Protesting Church, the Roman Catholic Church must have been before it; for if it had not been before the Protestant Church, it could not have been reformed; and if it was before the Protestant Church (as his own minister acknowledged) it must be the oldest Church; and if the oldest Church, it must be the true Church, or else Christ told a lie, for when he established *his* Church, about eighteen hundred years ago, he declared that he built it on a Rock, and that the powers of Hell or error should never prevail against it, Matthew xxviii. 20.

But here arose a tenfold difficulty; "How, said he, can the *Church of Rome* be the *true Church* of Christ? Is not the *Church of Rome* the *Babylon* of the Revelations? Is not the *Pope*, the head of that Church, *Antichrist?* are not his followers, *Idolaters?* Do not our preachers, (who tell us they deliver nothing but the word of God) constantly assure us it is so?"

In this state of perplexity and doubt, Andrew went home, almost in despair, thinking it in vain to search any further; and hoping that God in his great mercy, would save him, though he was in the wrong religion, as he could find no better. Whilst these, and similar thoughts engaged his whole attention, he took up his Bible, and opened that passage in the Acts viii. where we read that Philip was sent by the Almighty to instruct, and baptize the eunuch of the queen of Candace, who was

returning from Jerusalem, sitting in his chariot, and reading Isaias the "Prophet." The spirit said to Philip, go near and join thyself to the chariot. And Philip, running thither, heard him reading the prophet Isaias, and he said, "thinkest thou that thou understandest what thou readest?" "And he said, how can I, except some man should guide me?" Philip then explained to him the meaning of the scripture; and upon his believing, he baptized him. "Oh! exclaimed Andrew, and how can *I* understand what *I* read in the scripture, except some man *guide* and *show me?* Oh! where is Philip to be found, or Philip's successors, the true pastors of Christ? Do thou, (said he, casting himself on his knees, and praying with all the fervor and earnestness of his soul,) do thou, who sent Philip to the eunuch, vouchsafe to send some minister of salvation to me. In thy tender mercy, direct me to the paths of truth, and suffer not my soul, for which thou hast paid so great a price, to perish in the ways of error and death."

CHAPTER II.

ANDREW'S CONVERSATION WITH SMITH.

Andrew had scarcely ended his prayer, when John Smith, a neighbor of his, and a very good liver, but a Roman Catholic, entered the house, and seeing his uneasiness, thus addressed him: "Well, Andrew, why those tears and

melancholy looks? has some great misfortune befallen you?" "Oh, no," said he, "No; I am seeking the Lord; I am looking for the way to heaven." "What then," said Smith; "are you not satisfied with your present way?" "I am not," replied Andrew: "I am tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine; I am constantly believing and disbelieving, what appears to me the truth one day, appears to me error another; I am unsettled and *very unhappy;* knowing that I must believe the true doctrines of Jesus, or I cannot be saved, for St. Paul (Heb. xi. 6.) says, 'that without faith it is impossible to please God,' and, at the same time, not knowing, for certain, what those true doctrines are; and surely to a thoughtful person, who values the joys of Heaven, or dreads the torments of Hell, a state of mind like mine must be most distressing. Indeed it is so to me; I feel very very unhappy."

"I can easily believe you," said Smith; "a state of doubt, especially regarding subjects of so serious a nature as those involving the joys of Heaven, and the torments of Hell, must be truly distressing. Have you been long troubled with those doubts?" "Many years," answered Andrew with a sigh. "Many years; but much more so within these last few months; so that, of late, I have had literally no rest." "Have you never *opened* your mind to your friends on those subjects?" asked Smith: "have you never consulted your *Minister*, and asked *his* advice?" "Frequently,"

replied Andrew; "but without any *real* satisfaction. Instead of solving my doubts, both my friends and the Minister evaded my difficulties, and referred me to the *Bible* as the *sure* and *only* means of calming my mind, and removing my doubts. But I can assure you, Smith, that the *Bible* has not yet removed any of my doubts; and I feel now perfectly persuaded it never will. For, I can *never* be certain, that I understand it right." "True," replied Smith, "the *Bible* alone cannot clear up your doubts; it cannot answer your questions, nor explain its difficult texts to you, nor tell you when you interpret them right, and when wrong. There must be, of course, some *living authority* to perform those kind offices for you, or else your doubts must for ever remain. And is there any such *living authority* appointed by Jesus to explain his law to us? yes: the Bible itself tells us so. St. Paul (Eph. iv. 11. 14.) says, that Christ has appointed *Pastors* and *Teachers* in his Church to *guide* and *direct* us, "that we may not be children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine." Jesus also says, (St. Matt. xxviii. 19. 20.) that he sent Pastors to *teach all nations*, even unto the end of the world. And in St. Luke, x. 16. he commands us to hear them, even as we should hear himself; assuring us, in St. John, that our obedience or disobedience to them is a certain mark, by which we may know whether we belong to God or not; 'he that knoweth God,' says St. John, 'heareth us. He that is not of God, heareth us not.

Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.'" (1 John iv. 6.) "Ah," said Andrew, "I have often read and studied these texts. I am fully persuaded that they point out to us the pastors of the Church as our guides and teachers, from whom we are to receive our faith. And under this conviction, often have I gone to hear and consult our parsons, but they, as often, have sent me back to read and consult the Bible. 'We, they said, are but fallible men; we may err, and lead you astray—follow no man's opinion; read and follow the *Bible alone;* the *Bible alone* is the religion of *Protestants.*' Well, following their direction, I again read the Bible, and again *doubted.* Opening that sacred book, I read, (Heb. xiii. 7. 17.) 'Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken to you the word of God; whose faith follow;'—and 'obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls as they that must give account.' Again, turning over a few leaves, I found in St. Matt. xviii. 17. these alarming words, 'If he neglect to hear the Church (that is, the Pastors of the Church) let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican.' In these texts, said I, Jesus and his apostles do not tell me to look upon the Bible as my rule; they evidently send me to the *Pastors of the Church,* and command me to *obey them,* and to *follow their faith.* Thus I observed that our *Preachers* sent me to the *Bible,* and the *Bible* sent me to the *Pastors of the*

Church. Surely, said I, this is a strange method of instruction: either our preachers or the Bible must be wrong; now I knew for certain that the Bible could not be wrong; it is the infallible truth of God; therefore, said I, our *Preachers* must be wrong; and if our *Preachers* be wrong, they cannot be the *Pastors* commissioned by Christ to teach us the way to heaven; and if they be not the *true Pastors* commissioned to teach us, there must be *other Pastors* of some *other Church*, to whom the *Bible* sends us."

Smith having paid great attention to Andrew's remarks, said, "I am much pleased to hear your good reasoning; yes, Andrew, if your *Preachers* send you to the *Bible*, as to your *only rule* to conduct you, and to teach you the truths of eternity, they as much as tell you they are not appointed by the Lord to be your guides; and consequently, that they are not the *Prelates* whom the *Bible* commands you to obey." "So I begin to suspect," said Andrew; "but where are these *true Prelates* and Teachers to be found?" "Shall I tell you," said Smith. "Ah! I wish you could tell," replied Andrew, "for your own sake as well as mine." And here Andrew could not help feeling a great contempt for Smith, who, as a Roman Catholic, he judged to know nothing at all about the Bible, and the truths of religion, "Poor Idolater," said he, within himself, "adoring wooden gods and saints, you teach me, a Protestant, who know the Bible at my fingers' ends, where I am to find the true

Pastors of the Church!" "Shall I tell you?" said Smith again. "Well! come," replied Andrew, "say what you think." "The *Pastors* of the Church," said Smith, "whom we are commanded by the *Bible* to hear, are the *Pastors* of the CATHOLIC CHURCH, the lawful successors of the *Apostles*. If you will hear them and follow their faith, your doubts and perplexities will soon vanish; and you will experience that inward peace and content of mind of which you have been so long in search."

Here Andrew, with warmth, said, "What! do you mean the *Pastors* of the *Church of Rome?* of that Church which has *Antichrist* for its head, and whose members are *Idolaters?*" "Oh! Andrew," exclaimed Smith, "do keep your temper; shew yourself to be a Christian, by expressions of charity: and do not thus slander and calumniate your Christian brethren. Was the Church of Rome such as you represent it to be, I would hate it as much as you do; I would fly from it with horror, and, with earnestness, exhort all others to follow my example. But believe me, Andrew, it is no such thing; the CATHOLIC CHURCH, as you will find upon inquiry, is quite the reverse of what you have been taught to consider it to be." "Well, come then," said Andrew, "I will not interrupt you any more, at least not with uncharitable expressions; I will with attention hear what you have to say; and, what is more, I will promise, if you can prove to me that the Pastors of the Roman Catholic Church are the true Pastors of Christ, and the

successors of the Apostles, I will promise to hear them, and to follow their faith; and, in spite of all the world may say against it, I will become a member of that Church."—"And I will promise," said Smith, "on my part, that if I cannot prove it, I will no longer profess myself a Catholic." "Well," replied Andrew, "that is fair."

"In order to beg the help of Him, who alone can enlighten them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, let us," said Smith, "with all humility and fervor, pray: O, Lord, do thou who hast sent thine only son Jesus to teach us the truths of eternity; who hast commanded us to believe those truths, under pain of eternal misery; who hast said, Mark xvi. 16. 'he that believeth not shall be damned,' do thou in thy great mercy, direct us to the true faith, and conduct us, we beseech thee, to that Church, to which thou daily callest such as shall be saved."

CHAPTER III.

SMITH'S PROOFS IN FAVOR OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

"Before I proceed," said Smith, "to prove that the Pastors of the Catholic Church are the true Pastors and Ministers of Christ, I will suppose, in the first place, Andrew, that you believe the *Bible* to be the word of God, and infallibly true, in what it teaches." "I do be-

lieve it to be the word of God," replied Andrew.

"In the second place, you allow that in the Bible, there are many things difficult to be understood, which are by many perverted to their own destruction." "Yes," answered Andrew, "I have found it by my own experience, and St. Peter also says so, 2 Pet. iii. 16."

"In the third place you agree with me, I think, that the *Bible alone*, cannot be the rule left us by Jesus Christ, to guide us to the truth, since many, there are, according to St. Peter, who, by interpreting it wrong, are led into error and destruction.

It cannot evidently be a rule to those who have not learnt to read, of which there are thousands upon thousands in the world. Of course to *these* it can be no rule at all; for they cannot make the least use of it.

It cannot even be a rule to those who *can read*, for even *those*, when they interpret by their own private judgment, can never agree about the sense of it; they often give the most contrary and contradictory interpretations to the same texts; and often alter their opinion about the sense they put upon them: what they believe to be the true sense to-day, they reject as false to-morrow; and are continually carried about with every wind of doctrine. Is not this true, Andrew?" "It is true," answered Andrew; "the *Bible alone*, evidently then, cannot be a sufficient rule to teach us Christianity. And, indeed, though Protestants used to think it sufficient, they seem at the present

day to have changed their opinions. Hence they now have their Notes, and Catechisms, and Creeds, and Articles, and Ministers, in order to teach their people the supposed meaning of the Bible, and to instruct them in the particular doctrines of their sects. So that the Protestants do not now learn their doctrines so much from the *Bible* as from their *Catechism* and *Preachers.*" "I am very glad," said Smith, "that you and your Protestant friends, at least many of them, agree with us Catholics, that the *Bible* alone is not a sufficient rule; but that Ministers and Pastors are necessary to explain to us the sense of it, in the same manner as judges and lawyers are necessary to explain the laws of our country to us. Yes, Andrew; there must assuredly be *Pastors* some where or other, who are the successors of the *Apostles*, and have a COMMISSION to preach, and teach, and administer the Sacraments. Now, the only difficulty is to ascertain who are these *Pastors*, the successors of the *Apostles*.

The best, and indeed the only way, to know them, and to distinguish *true* Pastors from *false* ones, is, to examine their *credentials;* if they can produce a COMMISSION delivered to them by the *Apostles*, or by lawful successors of the *Apostles*, we may rest assured that they are *true Pastors*, the same that Jesus commands us to hear, even as himself. (Luke x. 16.) If they can produce no such commission, we must beware of them, and reject them as *Impostors.* It is the command

of Jesus, 'beware of false prophets, says he, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.' Matt. vii. 15.

Indeed, this COMMISSION is so very necessary, that without it no man can preach. 'How shall they preach,' says St. Paul, except they be sent.' (Rom. x. 15.) Again, 'every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in the things that appertain to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.' And 'no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron,' (Heb. v. i. 4.) and Jesus himself says, 'He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." (John x. i.) So true it is, that a COMMISSION is necessary in order to preach, that Jesus himself would not preach till he had received one from his eternal Father: 'If I bear witness of myself, said he, my witness is not true. There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true.' (John v. 31. 32.) Again, he said, 'I am not come of myself; he (God) hath sent me.' (John vii. 28, and Luke iv. 18.) Jesus having received this COMMISSION from his eternal Father, communicated the same to his *Apostles*. 'As my Father,' said he, 'hath sent me, even so send I you;' (John xx. 21.) 'go ye therefore and teach all nations—teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo I am with you always even unto the end of the world.' (Matt. xxviii. 19. 20.)

This COMMISSION the *Apostles* communicated again to others; thus they sent Paul and Barnabas to preach at Seleucia. (Acts xiii. 3.) St. Paul sent Titus; the other *Apostles* ordained and sent *Bishops* and *Deacons* to other places; these *Bishops* sent others; those again sent others; and so on, by an uninterrupted succession in every age down to the present. So that there must be at present, and will always be, even to the end of the world, Bishops and Pastors, who possess the same COMMISSION and power which Jesus gave to his *Apostles*, and whom we are equally bound in conscience to hear. And that such are the *Pastors of the Catholic Church*, it is the easiest of easy things to prove. Indeed, there are few, or none, bold enough to deny it. We have as strong proofs that the *present Pastors* of the Catholic Church are the *successors of the Apostles*, as that Geo. IV. is the successor of Geo. I. They can all show you their COMMISSIONS derived from the *Apostles*.

Ask the first Catholic Priest you meet, what AUTHORITY he has to preach, and to administer the sacraments. He will prove to you that he was ordained, and qualified to offer sacrifice, and to perform the other duties of a Minister of Jesus, by such a *Catholic Bishop*, that Bishop was consecrated by such another Catholic Bishop, and so on, in a long chain which reaches up to the Apostles themselves. He will prove to you also, that he was sent to preach the Gospel, by such a Catholic Bishop, who received *authority* for that purpose from the present

Pope, who is the lawful successor of *St. Peter*, in the Apostolic see of Rome: whose successors in number amount to two hundred and fifty-five, following one another in regular order, during the space of nearly eighteen hundred years. And, to show that what I say is quite true, I will here set down the *names* of all the Popes, and the *order* of their succession, beginning with *St. Peter*, the first *Pope* of Rome, and ending with *Leo* XII. the present Pope.

Here Smith enumerated the Bishops of Rome in each century according to the order of succession, and concluded:—Thus, you see, Andrew, that we have in the Catholic Church, a regular succession of Pastors, which is brought down from Saint PETER, the first Pope, to LEO XII. the present Pope. Whilst the reformed Churches, so called, can trace the succession of their ministers no farther than *Martin Luther, the German;* who lived about three hundred years ago. Our Pastors, are the heirs of the *Apostles*, lawfully sent, and commissioned to preach, and offer sacrifice. Their ministers are only heirs of *Luther* the German, or *Calvin*, the Frenchman.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CONVERSION OF NATIONS.

And, to shew you still clearer, that *our Pastors* are the true Ministers of Jesus, I will now prove to you, that in them *alone*, have been

verified the promises of Christ, *of teaching all Nations. They* are the individuals who have, in each age, by their pious labours, aided by the blessing of Heaven, conducted infidel Nations into the sacred fold.

In the first age of Christianity, the labours of the Apostles and Disciples, especially of Saint PETER, and Saint PAUL, the founders of the Church of ROME, were blessed with incredible success.

In the second age, great conversions were wrought in *Africa*, *Gaul*, and *Britain*, by Missionaries sent from *Rome*.

In the third age, the *Goths*, and other barbarous Nations were converted.

In the fourth age, the *Ethiopians* and *Iberians* received the faith.

In the fifth age Saint *Palladius*, being sent from *Rome*, by Pope *Celestin*, about the year 430, converted the *Scots* to the faith of Christ. In the same age, Saint *Patrick*, who was sent by the same Pope, converted *all Ireland*. He was famous for sanctity and miracles, having even raised the dead to life.

In the sixth age, Saint *Augustine* or *Austin* the Monk, was sent by Saint *Gregory* the Great, the Pope of Rome, to *England;* and by preaching and miracles converted King *Ethelbert* with his people to the faith of Christ.

In the seventh age, Saint *Willibrord*, sent by *Pope Sergius*, converted the *Netherlands*.

In the eighth age, Saint *Boniface*, an Englishman, esteemed the Apostle of *Germany*,

was sent by *Pope Gregory* the second, and converted *Hesse*, *Thuringia*, *Westphalia*, and *Saxony*.

In the ninth age, Saint *Ansgarias* first Archbishop of *Hamborough* and *Bremen* carried the light of the Gospel into *Sweden*.

In the tenth age, the *Danes* were converted by Saint *Coppio*, first Bishop of *Arthusia*.

In the eleventh age, the *Hungarians* were converted under their King Saint *Stephen*.

In the twelfth age, *Levonia* received the faith of Christ by the preaching of Saint *Meinardus*.

In the thirteenth age many *Tartars* were converted by Missionaries sent by Pope *Innocent* IV.

In the fourteenth age, *Lithuania* was brought over to the Christian Faith.

In the fifteenth age Portuguese Missionaries preached the Gospel, with great success, in *Congo* and *Angola*.

And here I must remark, that *these missionaries* were all of them *Catholics*, sent by the *Pope of Rome*, and taught the *same doctrines*, which we Catholics teach at the present day. Till this time there were no *Protestants*, nor *Calvinists*, nor *Methodists*, all were of *one mind*, forming *one* fold under *one* Shepherd. It was in the sixteenth age, that *Luther* and *Calvin* separated themselves from the Church, and drew after them many of the faithful. But this loss which the Catholic Church sustained by the defection of many of her members, assuming to themselves the names of *Reformers*

and *Protestants*, was abundantly repaired by the conversion of Millions of others.

Thus, in the sixteenth age, *Saint Francis Xavier, sent by Pope Paul the III.* carried the light of the Gospel to the *East Indies*, to *Malabar Travancor*, the *Fishery*, *Moluccas*, *Delmora*, and *Japan;* converting by his great miracles, many hundred thousands of those Barbarians to Christ. (See his life written by Mr. Dryden.)

In the seventeenth age, Saint *Lewis Bertrand*, eminent for sanctity and miracles, preached the faith to several provinces of *Peru* in *South America*, and converted an innumerable multitude of Barbarians. His labors have been seconded by those of others; so that at the present day the inhabitants of *Terra Firma*, *New Grenada*, *New Andaluzia*, *Papayan*, *Peru*, and *Brazil*, and *Mexico*, are almost all *Catholics*, in communion with the See of *Rome*.

In the eighteenth age, most remarkable conversions were made in *Canada*, and *California*, in *North America*, and in *China*, and other parts.

In the present, or nineteenth age, missionaries are making great progress in divers parts of *Asia*. In the Empire of *China*, there are at present, six Catholic Bishops, and some hundreds of Catholic Priests, who, in spite of the persecution of the infidels, and at the risk of their lives (many of whom have been martyred for the faith) have converted, and con-

tinue to convert thousands upon thousands to the Catholic Faith.

The Catholic Missionaries are equally successful too, in *North America*. Several of the Chiefs of the Indian tribes have sent petitions to the President of the United States to send them more Catholic Missionaries. So that, in these our days, we see that of the Apostle to the Rom. x. 18. evidently verified in our Missionaries, 'their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world.' And ver. 15. 'How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things.' Now can any one be so *blind* and *unreasonable* as to charge *that Church* with *Idolatry* and *Superstition*, which, by her Pastors, has every where planted the *Cross of Jesus* upon the *ruins of Idolatry?*"

Here Andrew, in astonishment, could not help exclaiming, 'What! have *Catholic Pastors alone* converted *all Nations?* Have not *Protestant* and *Methodist Preachers* too converted Nations to Christianity?' 'No, Andrew,' replied Smith, 'No; they have never converted *one single Infidel Nation*, though they have spared neither money nor good will to do so. The most they can effect, is, to cause Christians to pass from one sect to another. You may perhaps know, that there are at present, in England, eight *Missionary Societies* for foreign parts. There are, too, a countless number of *Bible Societies*, which receive from the good natured and well disposed people of

England and America, thousands upon thousands of pounds and dollars annually, in aid of the conversion of Infidels; yet notwithstanding all this, what has been the fruit of all their labors? what their success? Have they converted any one Infidel Nation? or any *considerable part* of any such Nation to Christianity? No, Andrew, no; and I think I may say, without pretending to any great share of prophetic knowledge, that they never will. The conversion of Nations is a grace reserved for the *Catholic Church alone.* And, as a further proof of what I say, I will observe, that, even in *Bengal,* where there are nearly forty millions of people subject to England, the *Protestant* Missionaries make very few converts. C. Marsh, Esq. in a Committee of the House of Commons, (where he would not have ventured to assert a falsehood)declared that the Protestant Missionaries had not made more than *eighty* converts in *seven years,* and those almost all outcasts from the Hindoo religion. Ah! Andrew,whose labors appear to be the most blessed by Heaven? But, it is time to finish; I have proved that the *Pastors of the Catholic Church* are the *legitimate Successors* of the Apostles of Jesus, forming a long uninterrupted chain of Pastors from the Apostles to the present day; and, that, according to the command of Jesus, they have taught *all Nations;* consequently they are the Guides and Landmarks set up by him to direct us safe into the haven of Salvation. To them we are directed by the wise man, who says, ‘ Remove not the ancient

Landmark, which thy Fathers have set.' Pro. xxii. 28. And Jeremiah says, 'Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.' Jer. vi. 16. Again, 'Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father and he will shew thee, thy elders and they will tell thee.' Deut. xxxii. 7. In these texts, the Almighty directs you not to a *new, modern reformed Church*, not to a Church that is but one, two, or three hundred years old, but he directs you *clearly*, to the *old Church* which was built by Jesus, on a rock, one thousand eight hundred years ago; and which, according to his promise, Matth. xxviii. 19. shall stand *firm, immoveable,* and *unchanged*, till the end of time,—whilst he *frequently* warns you to avoid all novelties in matters of faith and religion. Every *new*, and *modern* religion is condemned by St. Paul, as *accursed* before God. 'Though we,' says he, 'or an Angel from Heaven preach any other Gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.' Gal. i. 8. Here the Apostle pronounces a *curse* upon all those who preach a *new* doctrine, or a *new* religion, contrary to that which we have received from the Apostles, however good it may seem to men; yes, even though an *Angel* from Heaven should teach it.

Now which is the *new* Religion? The Catholic, or the Protestant? why, clearly the Protestant religion is the new one. It came into

the world in the day of *Luther*, about three hundred years ago, that is fifteen hundred years after Christ, and of course fifteen hundred years too late to be the religion of Christ. And, which is the *old* religion? why, and with the greatest certainty I say it, the Catholic Religion is the *old* Religion. It is the *old* Religion of England; the very walls of their ancient churches and cathedrals witness it, they were all built by *Catholics*. Those venerable remains of crosses, which are met with on the public roads, witness it also; they were *all* raised by *Catholics*. It is, too, the old religion of Christendom; all kind of monuments attest it: even those whose interest it is to deny it; are obliged to own it. Now, if it be the oldest, Andrew, the consequence is evident; therefore, it is the true religion. But you are tired, Andrew, I will now"—"No; no;" exclaimed Andrew, "I am not tired; I wish you to continue; I could hear you all night: for, what you say gives great ease to my mind." "Well then," resumed Smith, "I will detain you a few minutes longer.

"There is another proof in favor of the Catholic Church at which you just now hinted; I mean its being called the CATHOLIC CHURCH. The true Church, you know, is called by the Apostles, in the creed; the CATHOLIC CHURCH. Of course, whatever Church has not this name is not the true Church, in order to find out the true Church, then, you need but to search for that Church which is called CATHOLIC. And what Church is called CATHOLIC? Why *our's*

Andrew, *our's alone*; even those who oppose us, call us Catholics. They call us Catholics in their writings, in their laws, and in their conversations. All call us Catholics, except a few bigotted preachers and ignorant persons, of the lowest order of society, who have been taught by ignorant parents or ill-natured tract-mongers to misname us *Romans* and *papists*. All the world beside call us CATHOLICS."

"Well Smith," exclaimed Andrew, "you quite surprise me; the proofs you produce in favor of the CATHOLIC CHURCH are very strong indeed; I can assure you, I never expected to hear so much from you or from *any other Catholic*; I begin to think that you *Catholics* are not so ignorant about religion, as our preachers would fain persuade us."

"These" said Smith, "are but a few of the arguments which attach us Catholics to the faith of our ancestors; it would take me too long to mention them all. If you wish to obtain the best information, I would recommend you to speak to one of our *Priests*; you will find them to be very different characters from what tract-mongers generally represent them to be. They will receive you with great kindness and affection; they will take a pleasure in answering your questions, and directing you in your search after truth; and I think I may venture to say, they will satisfy all reasonable doubts." "But, I should wish," said Andrew, "to hear a little more from you, before I go to the Priest." "Well, then," resumed Smith, "another motive for being a *Catholic*

is this; the Catholic religion is the safest to die in; and as a proof that it is the safest religion to die in, I can offer nothing more convincing than the sentiments and conduct of persons on their death-beds, when they must be supposed to be sincere. Now it is a certain fact, that thousands upon thousands of Protestants, on their death-beds, call for the assistance of Catholic Priests, and embrace the Catholic Faith; whilst it is equally certain that no Catholic, that is, no person, who had lived all his life-time a Catholic, was ever known to wish to die a Protestant; therefore, Andrew, I think this conclusion clear; the Catholic religion is the *safest and best*.

"Again, whilst we see thousands of Protestants daily becoming Catholics, though, by doing so they are exposed to the ridicule and persecutions of the ungodly; yet we seldom see, or hear of any Catholic becoming Protestant, unless with a view to live a more unrestrained and licentious life. And so evidently is this the case, that a Protestant Clergyman, *Dean Swift* used to say, whenever he heard of any Catholic becoming Protestant, 'I wish, when the Pope weeds his garden, he would not throw his nettles over our wall.' Of this class it is true, there have been a few, but they have often met with the most awful judgments of heaven. Dr. Milner mentions the following, in his "End of Religious Controversy;" Smyth was one of those wretched Priests, who, wanting the grace necessary for living up to the strictness of their obligations,

left the *Catholic Church*, and became a *Protestant*. This unfortunate man dropped down dead in Canterbury Cathedral, about the year 1780. About the same time another unprincipled Priest of Staffordshire, of the name of Taylor, met with the same fate, in stepping into a stage coach. Another still more unprincipled Priest, Dr. Geddes, with Lewis of Leominister, Holmes of Essex, and Rogers of Birmingham, all met with sudden deaths. James Quesnel, and James Nolan also, having both been warned, by their friends, of the fate they might expect, but continued to waver about returning to their duty, both dropped down dead in the streets, the former at Worcester, the latter in London. Awful and terrible judgments of God, Andrew, are these, on the crime of Apostacy!

"But it is quite time to finish; I will only add my earnest request, that in searching for the true religion, you will often reflect on the words of St. Matthew, xvi. 26, 'What will it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul.' Let no interest, nor wordly ease be here consulted; mind not what the world may say or think. For what are all these things when put in the balance with eternity? Let not the example of parents, or friends, or relations, prevent your examining the doctrines of the *Catholic Church*; none of these can excuse your ignorance and neglect, before the great Judge of the living and the dead. Allow me also, Andrew, to say, that according to our divines,

if you wish to succeed in your search, you must pray with great fervor and perseverance, you must, too, labour to renounce all sinful habits; and especially, the lust of the flesh, which too often blinds the understanding, and hardens the heart. For, 'true wisdom will not enter into a malevolent soul, nor dwell in a body subject to sin.'" Wisd. i. 4.

CHAPTER V.

ANDREW'S VISIT TO THE CATHOLIC CHAPEL.

When Smith had ended his argument, Andrew said, "I thank you kindly for your information. Do you know you have almost made me a CATHOLIC. I really begin to think that you are right; and I am fully determined to examine your doctrines to the bottom. Will you permit me to go with you to the Chapel to-morrow?" "Permit you to go?" said Smith, "yes I will take you with pleasure. But come early, that you may see and hear every thing: and after service be not afraid of troubling me with questions. But, for the present, I will wish you good night. And may what has passed this evening between us be productive of friendship here, and of bliss in heaven hereafter."

Before parting, they both kneeled down, and Smith prayed as follows:—"I adore thee, O my God, and love thee with my whole heart, I thank thee for all the benefits I have

received from thee, especially for thy having made me what I am, given me all I possess both of soul and of body, redeemed me by the precious blood of thy Son Jesus, and preserved me this day. If I have offended thee this day, either by thought, word, deed, or omission, I am sincerely sorry and humbly beg pardon. I am exceedingly sorry, too, from the bottom of my heart, for all the sins of my life past; and I firmly resolve, by the assistance of thy grace, never to offend thee more, but to avoid both sin and the occasions of sin." After this, he said the "Our Father, &c." "Hail Mary," the Creed, and the Confiteor; he prayed for his friends and his enemies, too, if he had any; for the living and for the dead; and then finished, by begging the Almighty to bless them, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Upon rising from prayer, Andrew desired Smith to show him the texts he had quoted, that he might examine them at leisure, when alone. Smith immediately complied with his request. He also left with him a Catholic Prayer Book; and then wishing each other good night, they parted.

Andrew being now quite alone, examined all the texts that had been quoted; he found them to be exactly as Smith had told him; and seemed to hear something whisper in his ear, THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IS THE TRUE CHURCH. He spent a great part of the night in praying that the Lord would direct him to the true Church, and in thinking on what Smith had

said; and the more he thought and examined, the more persuaded he felt that the CATHOLIC CHURCH must be the true Church.

When morning arrived Andrew's heart seemed to fail him. He began to waver and doubt whether he should go or not. "What," said he to himself, "What will my friends and relations say, when they hear that I have been to the *Roman Chapel*, as they call it in derision? They will laugh at me, and call me a turn-coat, idolater, and other such opprobrious names. They may possibly all forsake me, and become my enemies. But what then? Is it not better to lose the *favour of men* than to lose the *favour of God?* Is it not better to have all the world my enemies, than to have the God of Heaven against me? Will the fear of the displeasure of friends excuse me for not searching after and embracing the truth, when I shall appear before the Judge of the living and the dead? Ah! when I am stretched on my death-bed, my eyes dim, and about to be forever closed to all the objects of this world, and my soul about to hear its irrevocable sentence, which will place me either among the blessed in heaven, or among the reprobate in hell, I shall care nothing about what the world may think or say of me. My only comfort will be to reflect, that I have done my duty, and suffered reproach for the sake of Jésus, who has declared, that, 'If I confess him and his doctrines before men, He will also confess me before the Angels of God. But if I deny him before men, He will deny me before the An-

gels of God.'" Luke xii. 8. 9. Encouraged by these thoughts, Andrew left home, and went as quick as possible to join Smith at the Chapel.

On entering the Chapel, he was greatly struck with awe and surprise at the appearance of the place, having never been in a Catholic Chapel before; and, he was particularly edified by the devotion and piety of the people. But, there was one thing which scandalized him very much; and that was, *the Image of our Saviour on the Cross*, which is placed above the altar, and before which the people kneel. "Ah!" said he, "this looks like image worship; this cannot be right, when I once get out of this place, I will never more return."

After service, Smith asked Andrew how he liked? "Somethings," replied Andrew, "I like remarkably well; but, other things (and you must excuse my candour) I do not like at all; especially your worshipping the Image above the altar, this is surely idolatry." "Oh, Andrew," exclaimed Smith, "how can you say so? Do you really think that we worship the Image? No, Andrew; no more than we worship the walls. We worship one true living God, and no more; we believe that the Image of Jesus Crucified, can neither see us, nor hear us, nor help us; and consequently that it would be a crime to worship or adore it. We have it before us, when we pray in our Chapels, and churches, to remind us, that Jesus suffered and died for us. It is an easy

book, which can be read by the ignorant as well as by the learned; a book in which all see the ineffable love of Jesus for fallen man. It is, in fact, to our eyes, what a good sermon is to our ears; it serves to put good thoughts into their heads, and to excite us to the love of God. The same is to be said of the sign of the Cross, which we make on ourselves, and of all the ceremonies you see the Priest perform, during the sacrifice of the Mass; they are all of them intended to speak to our senses, and to raise our thoughts to heavenly things."

"Thank you, Smith," said Andrew, "for your explanation of the Catholic use of Images and Pictures. I am quite satisfied. To retain the Crucifix, for the reasons you have given, is both proper and profitable. I have a picture of Jesus crucified, hung up in my own house for the same purpose. I often cast my eyes upon it, and meditate on what Jesus suffered for the love of me. And surely the sufferings and love of Jesus for sinners, preached to us from the Cross, is capable of softening the hardest of hearts to compunction. Oh! I think you do well to keep the Crucifix in your Chapels for so good a purpose. It is calculated to excite in the hearts of all who look upon it, feelings of compunction, love, and confidence."

They had now arrived near to their homes, and were about to wish each other good day, when Andrew said, "I feel very anxious to hear more about your Religion; let us have a little more talk before we part." "It is now

dinner time," said Smith, "I will call upon you after dinner; and I will promise to spend the afternoon with you, if you will promise to go with me in the evening to hear the Catholic Lectures." "Well, I promise to do so," said Andrew; and saying this they parted.

CHAPTER VI.

ANDREW'S CONVERSION.

On Andrew's returning home, his friends, who had heard that he had been to the *Catholic Chapel*, attacked him with every kind of abusive language, calling him *Idolater*, *Roman*, and *Papist*. But he bore all their scoffs and abuse with meekness and patience; comforting himself with the thought that Jesus had been treated so before him, and had promised heaven as a reward to those who suffer for his sake. All that he said to them was this; "If the Catholic Religion be false and erroneous, prove it to be so and I will not embrace it; if it be the true religion, why should you hinder me from professing it, and thus saving my soul? I have examined the Protestant, Calvanist, Methodist, and Catholic Religions; I have examined them with a sincere desire of discovering the true one; now, if after such examination I have found the Catholic Religion to be the true one, and of all others the safest to die in, surely you must allow that I ought to embrace it, for there cannot be too great security, where eternity is at stake."

When Smith arrived after dinner he was overjoyed to find that Andrew's faith was not at all weakened by the persecutions of his friends. Indeed so far was Andrew from being ashamed of the true doctrines of Jesus, that he rejoiced that he was accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus.

Smith then spoke of the two Sacraments of *Penance* and *the Eucharist*. Against these Andrew had few or no objections; for he had always been led to believe, from what he had read in the Common Prayer Book, in the Visitation of the Sick, that Confession of Sins, and the Absolution of the Minister of Christ, were two necessary conditions for the forgiveness of sins.

He had always thought, too, that there was something more than *Bread* and *Wine* in the Holy Sacrament; for he had learnt from his Catechism, when a boy, "that the *Body* and *Blood* of Jesus Christ are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper. (see Prot. Catechism.)

In the evening, they went to Lectures.—And, as they expected, the Priest was speaking of the two Sacraments of *Penance* and *the Eucharist*, and so clearly did he prove the necessity and divine institution of them, as well from the Holy Scriptures, as from the belief of all Christian Ages, that all Doubts immediately vanished; and, after the Lectures, Andrew professed himself A CATHOLIC.

From that day, he employed his spare time in reading books of instruction, and learning

the Catholic doctrine from the Priest. And, he was happy to find, that the more he learnt of the Catholic doctrine, the more he was convinced of its Divinity.

Being now freed from all those *Doubts* which had long made him miserable, he could say with truth, with sincerity, and with the fullest conviction, I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH.

CHAP. VII.

ANDREW'S PREPARATION FOR THE SACRAMENTS.

Andrew, whilst a Protestant, had always believed that *Faith alone* was sufficient to justify a sinner: and, that a sure trust, and confidence that Christ had died for him, and taken away his sins, was all that was necessary for justification. He had imagined, that the moment a sinner could believe this, he became holy and justified before God; and that the spirit then witnesseth to his spirit, that he is a child of God. He had often heard persons declare that they had that spirit; he had often heard them assert, with as much apparent confidence, as if God himself had revealed it to them, that all their sins were forgiven through the merits of Jesus Christ, and that they were so free from all sin, that if they were to die at the moment they were speaking they should infallibly go to Heaven. He had often envied them their apparent happiness. "Oh! how

happy," he would, at times exclaim, "must they be, who are free from all Doubts and Fears, and are sure to go to Heaven!" He would often endeavor to persuade himself that he was of that number. "I have been a sinner," he would say, "but Jesus has died for me; yea, he has even taken away my sins. Why should I fear? Through faith in him I am certain of heaven." But notwithstanding all this, Andrew could never feel that Certainty of Justification of which he heard some others boast; and, indeed, it was a singular mercy of God he never did feel it. If Andrew had once been deluded by the evil Spirit, so far as to glory in his own righteousness, his pride and self-conceit would have driven the spirit of God far from him; for the holy spirit "resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble," James iv. 6. He might have been left in the ways of Darkness and Delusion; like the proud and self-conceited Pharasee, looking upon himself as a Saint free from sin, and being, in reality and before God, a sinner covered with guilt; walking in a way apparently good and secure, but in the end leading to death, Prov. xiv. 12.

The Almighty, by a special grace, was pleased to call Andrew from the ways of error, to his true Church, "to which he daily calls such as shall be saved." Acts ii. 47. Here Andrew learned a true, rational, and scriptural mode of Justification. Here he learned, that *Faith alone* can never justify a sinner: that besides *Faith* many other conditions are re-

quired to drive away sin and to deliver us from death. Here he learned to say with St. Paul, "Although I have *all faith*, so that I could remove mountains and have not *Charity* I am nothing." 1 Cor. xiii. 2. Here he learned from St. James, "that by *Works* a man is justified and not by *Faith only*," James, xi. 24. Here also he learned that the following virtues are necessary for the justification of a sinner:

1. FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST: "for without faith it is impossible to please God." Heb. xi. 6.

2. THE FEAR OF GOD; "for, the fear of the Lord driveth out sin; for he that is without fear cannot be justified," Eccles. i. 27.

3. HOPE AND CONFIDENCE IN THE MERCY OF GOD; "for he that putteth his trust in the Lord shall be healed." Prov. xxviii. 25. And therefore, "we are saved by *Hope*," Rom. viii. 24.

4. A SINCERE LOVE OF GOD; "he that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love;" John iv. 8. And, "he that loveth not, abideth in death." 1 John, iii. 14. Hence, "many sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much," Luke, xiii. 3.

5. A SINCERE REPENTANCE FOR OUR SINS: for, "except you repent you shall all likewise perish," Luke, xiii. 3. And, therefore, "repent, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out;" Acts, iii. 12.

Andrew learned also from the same *Divine Authority*, that, when our souls are thus dis-

posed by the above mentioned virtues of *Faith*, *Hope*, *Fear*, *Love*, and *Repentance* we must, in the next place, have recourse to the SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM, if we have not yet been baptized; or to the SACRAMENT OF PENANCE, if we have lost the grace of Justification by falling into sin after Baptism. Because *these Sacraments* are the sacred instruments ordained by Jesus Christ, as the only ordinary means by which the grace of Justification is poured down into our souls, when our souls are disposed by the above virtues. In consequence of this belief, Andrew became extremely anxious to receive these Sacraments so necessary for his justification; and, he lost no time in making a due preparation for them.

For weeks before his confession; he allotted a portion of each day, as much as his worldly occupations would permit, to humble and fervent prayer, begging that the holy spirit would enlighten the darkness of his understanding, and enable him both to know his sins, and to detest them. Often would he say, "O Lord, I desire with sincerity to leave my evil ways, and to return to Thee, the fountain of life. Like the Prodigal Child, I desire to go home to my Father, though I am infinitely unworthy to be called his child. I will go to him in hope of being received with the same tender mercy and compassion, as the Prodigal Son mentioned, Luke xv. I know that he is a God of mercy, and that a contrite and humble heart he will not despise."

In the examination of his Conscience, he carefully read over the *Ten Commandments*, the *Commands of the Church*, and the *Seven deadly sins*, which he found in his Prayer Book. And, in doing this, he perceived that, though he had not been a scandalous sinner, though he had never been gnilty of *Murder*, *Drunkenness*, *Theft*, or *Adultery;* yet he was far from being innocent. He discovered hundreds of sins, which he had never before thought of, sins of Thought, of Words, of Actions, and of Omissions. The more he examined his conscience, the more he was convinced that "in many things we all offend," James, iii. 2. And that "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." 1 John, i. 8.

In order to excite in his heart sentiments of compunction and sorrow, he would often reflect on the great goodness of God to him, and his base ingratitude. He would often exclaim, in the bitterness of soul; "It grieves me O my God, it grieves me to the bottom of my heart, that I have offended thee. Oh! that I could now, like Magdalen, present myself at the feet of my Saviour; Oh! that I could wash them with penitential tears! Forgive me, this time, O Jesus; forgive me, O Father of mercy, and, by thy grace, I will never offend thee more."

When the day arrived, on which he was to make his first confession, he felt a great internal struggle: The sins of his life, now, all crowded on his mind in their blackest colours.

So great did they appear to him, that he thought he could never for shame disclose them to the Minister of God. And, he was upon the point of falling back, when the Almighty conducted him to his Catholic friend Smith.

This good man assured him that his difficulties were more imaginary than real; that the Priest was bound, by all laws divine and human, to a perpetual secrecy, and would receive him with all the kindness and tenderness of a Parent; and, that, if he neglected this divine institution, he could neither expect peace here, nor happiness hereafter.

Encouraged thus by Smith, aided by the grace of God, he overcame every obstacle which the enemy of mankind had thrown in his way; with the utmost sincerity of heart, he unloaded his conscience of that heavy burden, which till then had oppressed it; and he experienced that cheerful and exquisite delight, which is the fruit of a good conscience.

After his confession, the object which of all others, he most ardently longed for, was the Holy Sacrament of the *Eucharist*, the *Bread of Life*, the same that came down from Heaven for the life of the world. "O Jesus!" he would often say, "Oh Jesus! my dear, my adorable Saviour, how much am I bound to love and to adore thee? Thou hast not only become man, and died for me, and for all poor sinners, but thou hast continued thy endearing love and tenderness to us, even by giving thyself to us in the holy Sacrament; inviting us to

receive thee in the most pressing manner; calling out to us, Matth. xi. 8. 'Come to me all you that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you.' Oh! teach me, dear Lord, to make a suitable return of love; O! Source of all good! come and take possession of my soul; I offer it to thee without reserve. Thou hast declared that thy delight is to be with the sons of men; O! may it be always my delight to be with Thee! Let me die to the world, and die to all creatures, that I may live to thee alone. Come, dear Jesus; come take away all my sins; blot out all my iniquities; create a clean heart in me, and renew a right spirit within my bowels. May thy sacred *Body* and *Blood*, which I now design, though unworthy, to receive, obtain for me the remission of my sins, a victory over all my evil thoughts, the beginning of a new life, and a sure protection of soul and body against all the snares of my enemies."

When he approached the altar, and beheld the sacred Host, he exclaimed, "I adore thee, O Jesus, under these humble veils; though I see thee not, as Thomas did, yet do I confess thee to be my Lord and my God! O Eternal Word! the delight of angels and of men, I adore Thee! Thou knowest I am sick and weak; oh! heal me, strengthen me, and have mercy on me! my only hope is in thee, and by thee alone."

As soon as he had received the Holy Communion, with a lively faith and most profound humility, he adored Jesus, and entertained him

with acts of *Faith, Love, Humility*, and *Praise*; consecrating to his divine service his soul and body for time and eternity. The rest of the day he spent in more than ordinary retirement and recollection; begging of Jesus never to forsake him, but to lead him safe through life to a blessed Immortality.

CHAPTER VIII.

ANDREW'S DAILY EXERCISES.

After communion, considering himself now belonging to God in an especial manner, and having become the temple of the living God, consecrated by his divine presence, he resolved in future, to employ all the faculties of his soul, and senses of his body, in promoting, as far as human weakness would permit, the greater honor and glory of God. From this time, he became a model of every virtue. In the morning, as soon as he awoke, he never failed to give his first thoughts to God. "O heavenly Father," he would say, "I give Thee most sincere thanks for having preserved me the night past from all dangers, and brought me to the beginning of another day; I offer to thee every *thought*, *word*, and *action*, of this day, to thy greater glory; I offer to thee also, whatever I may have to suffer, whether from pain, sickness, or the ill-nature and malice of those with whom I am obliged to associate, to be united with the sufferings of Jesus, for the

expiation of my sins. And I beg and beseech thee to give thy blessing to these my resolutions, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, amen;" at the same time making the sign of the Cross.

When clothed, he would kneel down and adore God, with all the powers of his soul, repeating acts of *faith*, *hope*, *love*, and *contrition*; adding the "Our Father," &c., "Hail Mary," &c., "I believe," &c.; and the other prayers out of the "True Piety," which he concluded, as often as time would permit, with a short lesson out of some pious book.

When he began his work, he invariably made the sign of the Cross, begging that God would bless both him and his work, through the merits of Jesus, who died on the Cross, saying at the same time, "O my God, I offer this work to thee, please to give it thy blessing."

During his work, his heart was, as much as possible, fixed on God; he seemed to hear, in the interior of his soul, a soft sweet voice commanding him to respect, and inviting him to adore the GREAT GOD, before whom the whole world is, as if it were not. He found God every where, he every where spoke to him by pious ejaculations; and, every where strove to please him by referring all his actions to his honor. So that he literally fulfilled what the Apostle commands, "All whatsoever you do in word or in work, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ," Colos, iii. 17. When tempted to sin, he would make the sign of the Cross upon

his heart, and say; "O Lord, save me or I perish: Thou who made me have mercy on me."

When affected by sickness, or pain, he would say; "O Lord, thy will be done; I take this for my sins." But, his chief delight was, in making acts of the *Love of God*; a hundred times a day he would repeat this, or the like Prayer, "O God, I love thee; I love thee with my whole heart; Oh! that I could love thee, as the blessed love thee in heaven: do thou, O God, teach me to love thee, as I ought, every day more and more."

CHAPTER IX.

ANDREW'S DEATH.

Andrew had now lived in the practice of every virtue, till the age of fifty, when he was visited with his last sickness. He received it, as a notice from his heavenly Father, that it was now time for him to quit this world, and to receive the reward of his labors. As he had not fixed his heart on the goods of this world, he felt no great uneasiness, at the prospect of his having shortly to leave them. All his thoughts were directed to the sanctification of his soul, and to arm himself against the attacks of his spiritual enemies, who, according to St. Peter, i. Ep. v. "are always going about like roaring Lions seeking whom they may de-

vour," but who exert themselves most against us at the approach of death.

Following the admonition of St. James, v. 14. "Is any sick among you? let him call in the priests of the Church;" he did call in the Priests of the Church. He also confessed his sins to them according to the direction of the same Apostle, "confess your sins one to another, and pray for one another that you may be saved," v. 16. He was then anointed with Holy Oil, blessed by the Bishop for that purpose, as St. James directs, "is any sick among you? let him call for the Priests of the Church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." St. James v. 14. 15.

While the Priest was praying for him, and anointing his eyes, ears, and other senses in the name of the Lord, he would exclaim, with lively faith and great confidence in the mercy of God, and the merits of Jesus his Saviour: "By this holy anointing, and by the prayers of thy Church, pardon me, dear Jesus, all the sins I have committed by my Eyes, Ears, Nose, Mouth, Hands, and Feet." With pious resignation he said, "dispose of me, O God, as thou knowest best, do with me whatever thou pleasest, give me life or death; all that I beg of thee is this; Oh, and I will continue to beg it of thee with fervor and perseverance, that whenever I die, I may die the death of

the Just, that I may see thee, and love thee, O God, for eternity."

During the remainder of his sickness, nothing on earth seemed to engage his affections; every motion of his heart was directed to God; he sighed only for God; he spoke of nothing but of God; in a word, his conversation was in Heaven. The sufferings of Jesus on the Cross, were to him a subject of unspeakable comfort; he would often place himself, in spirit, at the feet of Jesus with Magdalen, and wash them with his tears; putting his confidence in him alone, and begging him to be his Advocate with the Father. Frequently would he exclaim, with all the fervor of his soul; "Oh thou comforter of distressed souls! Oh good Shepherd! do not thou forsake me, when every thing else will leave and abandon me. Be mindful of me a poor creature, whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious blood; let those sacred hands, which were nailed to the Cross, be raised up for me; let that sacred blood, which thou sheddest so plentifully for me and for all poor sinners, plead for me, and open for me the Gates of Heaven.

Ah! and when my feet, benumbed with death, shall admonish me that my mortal course is drawing to an end, *Merciful Jesus have mercy on me.*

When my eyes shall become dim, and troubled at the approach of death, and shall fix themselves on Thee, *my last* and *only* support; *Merciful Jesus have mercy on me.*

When my face shall become pale and livid.

and shall inspire the beholders with pity and dismay,—When my ears shall be shut for ever to the discourse of men,—When the last tear, the forerunner of my dissolution, shall drop from my eye,—When my Relations and Friends, encircling my bed, shall shed the tear of pity over me, and invoke thy clemency in my behalf; *Merciful Jesus have mercy on me.*

Oh! at that awful hour, send thy holy angels, thy ministering spirits, to encamp round my bed; to protect me against all the powers of Darkness; to defend me from all my enemies; and, to conduct my soul to the Mansions of eternal repose."

Addressing himself to his relations and friends who had come to pray for him, and with him, he thanked them kindly, assuring them that he would not forget to pray hard for them when arrived in Heaven. Seeing some of them weeping, he said; "Oh! do not grieve; is it not time that I should consummate my sacrifice? If you truly loved me, you ought to rejoice at seeing me so near my longed-for country, the Paradise of God, the region of never ending joys. Our friendship," said he, "I hope, will not be broken by death. No; I hope it will be renewed for eternity in Heaven. After a few more years spent faithfully by you; in the service of God, we shall again meet in an unchangeable, and never ending Bliss. Oh! my beloved friends, welcome, happy the hour which is to remove me from *Misery* to *Happiness*, and from *Death* to *Immortality*. "I

rejoice at the things that are said to me, we shall go into the House of our Lord." (Ps. cxxi.)

Andrew being now almost exhausted, and no longer able to speak, placed his arms over his breast in the form of a Cross, offering himself a sacrifice of expiation for his sins, in union with the sufferings of Jesus on the Cross. The composure and peace which appeared on his countenance, seemed to say to all the beholders, that his preparation for death was perfect, and his passage to Heaven safe and secure. God had adopted him as his child; Jesus had taken up his abode with him: the angels of God had encamped round about him; when at length the moment of his departure arrives. The angels conduct his happy soul to the company of the blessed; he beholds his God face to face; and is instantly and eternally happy. "Oh! may we die the death of the righteous; may our last end be like his!" (Numbers, xxiii. 10.)

THE

CONVERSION

OF THE

REVEREND JOHN THAYER,

OF BOSTON.

PHILADELPHIA.
E. CUMMISKEY—SOUTH SIXTH STREET.
1837.

THE

CONVERSION

OF THE

REVEREND JOHN THAYER,

OF BOSTON.

The Public Papers have already announced the Conversion of a Protestant Minister wrought at Rome, at the time of the miracles of the Venerable Labre. I am that Protestant converted to the faith: and being led to it by a very special providence, like the blind man in the gospel miraculously healed, it gives me pleasure, and I think it my duty, to publish the goodness of a bountiful God, to whom I am indebted for the light and life of grace. Both my conversion, and my solemn abjuration at Rome, were public. Passing afterwards into France, I related my story, or rather that of Divine Providence in my regard, to a great number of respectable persons, who wished to learn the particulars of it. I was afterwards strongly solicited by some friends, to send it to the press, for the edification of Christians, and for the greater glory of God. Yielding to their reasons, and their au-

thority, I now, *by their advice*, give it both in English and French, in favor of those who only understand one of those languages.

I was born in Boston of a family in easy circumstances. I was brought up there in the Protestant Religion, the only prevailing, and almost the only known in New England. At first I had refused to study, but at the age of sixteen, by reflection, and a certain desire of improvement, I entreated my parents to put me to school. By dint of application I repaired lost time, and by the help of a good teacher, made a tolerably rapid progress. At the conclusion of my studies, I was made a Minister of the Puritan sect, and exercised my function for two years, applying myself to the study of Holy Scripture, and to preaching. In the mean time, I felt a secret inclination to travel; I nourished the desire, and formed a resolution of passing into Europe, to learn the languages which are the most in use, and to acquire a knowledge of the constitution of states, of the manners, customs, laws and government of the principal nations, in order to acquire, by this political knowledge, a greater consequence in my own country, and thus to become more useful to it. Such were my human views, without the least suspicion of the secret designs of Providence, which was preparing for me more precious advantages. I embarked for Europe, and arrived in France at the end of the year 1781. I remained there ten months, totally taken up in studying the language, in reading the best authors, and instructing my-

self in the principles of the Government: I was there attacked with a fit of illness, and as I feared that it would be attended with serious consequences, my first concern was to forbid that any Catholic Priest should be suffered to come near me; such was my attachment to my own sect. After my recovery, I spent three months in England, attentive as in France, in observing the manners and customs of the country. I was desired to preach; I complied, but it being observed that my doctrines did not agree with that of the persons before whom I spoke, I replied that I had taken it from the gospel. It is on this, that all the sects, however opposite to each other, establish their various systems; a striking proof of the necessity of a living authority to fix its true sense! I returned to France, with the intention of passing thence to Rome, constantly bent on the same pursuits; and as it may easily be imagined, strongly prejudiced both against the nation and religion of that country, which had been represented to me in the most odious colors. However, during my stay in France, I had formed a more favorable idea of the Catholic Religion, and my intercourse with the Italians contributed also to remove my prejudices against them. In our passage from Marseilles to Rome, we were becalmed, and obliged to stop some days at a little port called *Port Ercole*. The Marquis D'Elmoro, a respectable old Gentleman, received me without any recommendation to him, and treated me with the kindness and affection of a father: his

house, his table, his library were at my service and when we parted, he made me promise to correspond with him. I had the happiness, wherever I went, to meet with Italians of the same character, and all with whom I have been concerned, have shown the same eagerness to oblige me, especially the worthy and virtuous family in which I lodged at Rome, and in which I found myself as in the centre of my own family. Such goodness, such cordiality to a stranger, to an avowed Protestant, at once touched and surprised me. This Religion, said I, is not then so unsociable, and does not, as I have been told, inspire sentiments of aversion and intolerancy to those of a different persuasion. Thus, from day to day, I condemned the unjust prejudices, which had been suggested to me, and God disposed matters at a distance to bring me insensibly to the happy term, at which I have arrived. My first concern at Rome, was to visit the most celebrated masterpieces and monuments of antiquity, which attract the notice of strangers; among others the Rotunda or Pantheon, a temple formerly consecrated to the worship of all the false deities of Paganism, but at present dedicated to the honor of the Blessed Virgin, and of all the Saints. At the sight of this superb edifice, I was struck with an idea which appeared to me sublime, and which I thought might furnish the subject of an elegant discourse, if the Catholic Religion were true. The following is, in substance, the idea which occurred to me at that time. "This Temple; formerly consecrat-

ed to the worship of false gods, now become the Temple of the true God; the cross of Jesus Christ raised on the wrecks of the idols, collected to form for it, as it were, a more glorious trophy, and from thence exhibited to the whole world; this city, formerly the mistress of the universe, and the Capital of the Pagan world, now become the Capital of the Christian world; these, I say, are living and lasting monuments of the triumph of Jesus Christ over the *strong-armed*, and of the establishment of his Empire upon the ruins of that of Satan. Yes, it was worthy of God, to make the centre of idolatry, the centre of the true faith; the first city in the world, the capital of his kingdom; in short, this famous school of all arts, this celebrated city, which draws the attention of the curious and strangers from all parts of the world, the school of truth, and the common centre of union among all those who believe in Jesus Christ: then nothing would be wanting to the exterior glory of his Religion, and to the visibility of his Church, which he undoubtedly intended to exhibit to the eyes of all mankind; it would then be truly a *city built upon a mountain*, so exposed to the sight of all the world, that it could not be concealed." This idea pleased me much, and as I was fond of the eloquence of the pulpit, I wished it were true, to be able to treat so beautiful a subject. This first ray of light should have led me farther; but as yet, it was no more in my eyes than a pleasing fancy, which I relinquished to attend to the purposes I had formed.

I learnt Italian much sooner, and with much more facility than French; and in a short time was able to read the best authors in that language. According to my intention, I studied at the same time, the constitution and actual state of Rome. From time to time, however, the Catholic Religion returned to my mind; and although it made no part of my plan of studies, I was desirous nevertheless of instructing myself thoroughly in its principles, during my stay in that city; for the same reason that I should have wished to know the Religion of Mahomet, had I been at Constantinople. I was far from suspecting that my own was false, or at least from thinking of embracing another; I only wished to know the doctrine of Catholics from their own lips, that I might not impute to them what they did not avow themselves. In this design I addressed myself to several Ecclesiastics, and according to my custom of adapting my conversation to each one's profession, I entered on the topic of Religion; but they had more piety than light, and seeing me a determined Protestant, they condemned me without informing me, and we parted equally discontented, they with my attachment to my errors, and I with their zeal, which did not appear to be according to knowledge. On the whole, my only intention was to learn their opinions, not to be disabused of my own; and I thought of nothing more than to satisfy my curiosity; but thanks to that admirable Providence which made all conduce to my good; as the desire of travelling had led me to

the centre of light, without my knowledge, so the desire of instructing myself, brought me to the knowledge of the truth without my intention. After having often sought for an opportunity of conversing with some person well informed, both able and willing to instruct me thoroughly in the Catholic doctrine, I met with two Ecclesiastics in a place which I was accustomed to frequent. I entered into conversation with them, and declared who I was and what I wanted. At that time I thought with respect to the Jesuits, as all other Protestants do; but yet I told them that I should be glad to form an acquaintance with some of them. I know, said I, they are cunning, designing men, but they are celebrated for their learning; and while I profit by their lights, I will carefully guard myself against their subtility. The two persons with whom I was then conversing were of the Society of Jesus: my frankness did not displease them; they declared themselves what they were, adding that they would not undertake to give me the instructions I desired, but would refer me to an able man, who would satisfy my inquiries. In effect they introduced me to one of their brethren, who was well known in Rome, and much distinguished for his learning and piety. —"Sir," said I, when introduced to the gentleman, "I may possibly have conceived some false notions of your Religion, as all the knowledge I have of it, is taken from the report of its enemies; if this be the case I wish to be undeceived, for I would not entertain a preju-

dice against any person, not even against the Devil. Yet do not think of converting me, for certainly you will not succeed." This blunt introduction did not prevent him from receiving me with a gentleness and affability which could only be the effect of true charity. He consented to have some conferences on Religion. At first he exposed in order all the articles of the Catholic doctrine; which exposition lasted some days. I listened with attention, and without interrupting him; but on my return home never failed to set down in writing the difficulties and arguments which seemed to combat with each one of these dogmas and articles. Though many difficulties occurred to my mind, I could not but remark a wonderful harmony through the whole system of the Catholic Religion, and wisdom which seemed to have something divine. When he finished his exposition, I proposed in my turn, my difficulties and doubts; and we spent above three months in discussing these articles. I was oftentimes at a loss for a reply, because I was candid in the discussion, and sincerely meant to instruct myself, and not to cavil: yet many obscurities and embarrassments still remained, which I was anxious to remove; and as this respectable man could only give me a few leisure hours, and at intervals, to fill up the vacant time between our conferences, I had recourse to another Jesuit, who had not less zeal or less knowledge. He began with me in a manner which surprised me. "We will not," said he, "enter on this subject at present: go, say the

Lord's Prayer thrice, and return to me on such a day." I could not refrain from smiling at the singularity of this reception, and replied, I am not yet a member of your Church, and already you impose on me a penance." We parted; but reflecting afterwards, that prayer, far from misleading, must be of real service to me, and that a Religion which teaches to begin by prayer an enquiry into its tenets, must be confident that they are established on solid proofs. I complied with what he had prescribed, and met him on the day appointed. I was already acquainted with the Catholic doctrine; he had nothing more to do than to clear up those points, concerning which I still had my doubts. As I proposed my difficulties on each of these heads, he pointed out the passages in the best Theologians and Controvertists, where they are treated at large; he procured me their works, and I read them with attention. I had an opportunity of examining thoroughly each one of the articles contested between Protestants and Catholics, and of weighing the reasons which the latter allege to support their sentiments. I derived likewise much help from an Augustinian Friar, to whom I addressed myself at the same time; he took particular pains to shew me the difference which Catholics make between articles of faith and simple opinions, which the Church permits to be treated in schools, without either adopting or rejecting them. This distinction threw a light on the subject, and contributed greatly to put clearness in my ideas: for Pro-

testants, by blending these two objects, are accustomed to create confusion in the whole system. There is a perfect unity of faith among Catholics; it is true that there are different opinions on many undecided points. It is from mixing together these two things which are so widely different, that our adversaries take occasion to attribute to *faith*, what only belongs to free and indifferent *opinions*. The care which I thus took to consult several Doctors, proved doubly useful to me: for at the same time that I profited by the lights of each of them, I had an opportunity to remark that they agreed perfectly in matters of faith; which indeed must be *one* as truth is *one*. This uniformity which has subsisted among Catholics, through all ages, made a lively impression on me, because I had never discovered it among Protestants. I had been connected with the heads of our sects; I had often conversed with them; I knew their sentiments; there were not two among them who agreed in the most essential articles; what is more, there was not one who had not varied in his doctrine. I recollect that one of our most celebrated Preachers once made the same declaration to me. "When I preached in such a place," said he, "I passed for heterodox; I was so at that time, for I had very erroneous sentiments; but I have changed since, and were I to preach there at present my doctrine would be judged pure and orthodox: but this is common to all our preachers; I do not know one who has not, like myself, varied in his doctrine."

This declaration made no impression on me at the time he was speaking; but it has occurred since, and has given rise to many reflections. Another proof which verifies the common saying, that good or evil principles imbibed in youth produce sooner or later their effect. This instability of our leading men in their doctrine, caused me much pain: I saw that it was an inevitable consequence of the fundamental principle of Protestants, which constitutes each one the judge of his own belief. By this principle there can be no fixed rule of faith. It is this which causes the eternal contradiction of ministers among themselves, and the frequent variations of each of them in their doctrine. I had endeavored to conciliate their systems together, but could find no other way, than by supposing it sufficed to believe in Jesus Christ, and to intend to honor God; but I soon found that this method, with which I was much pleased, tended equally to reconcile the most opposite and monstrous sects; I consequently from day to day gave myself greater scope, and fixed no bounds to the liberty of thinking. I had friends among the Quakers, the Anabaptists, the Arminians and others, and in a short time I should have adopted a system of toleration in its greatest extent. Protestants vainly pretend that they admit Scripture for the rule of their faith, since they acknowledge no living authority to determine its sense; since each one is suffered to give it a private interpretation, it is impossible to convince them of error; and when the Socinian, for instance, says, that

he cannot find in Scripture a demonstrative proof of the divinity of Jesus Christ, no one has a right to require that he should believe this dogma, or to condemn him because he rejects it. This principle goes farther, and leads the man who reasons justly, to an indifference of all Religion, and saps the very foundation of christianity, by establishing the private judgment of each individual the supreme arbiter of his creed. This reflection, and a thousand others which occurred, had not, at that time, all the effect which they ought to have produced: however in the end they did not a little contribute to open my eyes to the truth. My researches had already carried me much farther than I had designed: at first I had only intended to form an exact knowledge of the Catholic doctrine, and I was insensibly come to such a state, that I discovered nothing in it, but what was reasonable. When I began my enquiry, I had not the least suspicion that my own sect was false, I already found it deficient, and had my doubts, though I was very far from being determined to abandon it. The prejudices in which I had been educated had still too much influence over my mind, and my heart was not yet disposed to make the sacrifice which this change required. I thought I had done a great deal by resolving to take with me to America the best works of controversy which had been written by Catholics, and to read them on my return, with a determination of then changing my Religion, if after mature reflection, I could not answer their arguments:

for I was resolved, whatever proof was brought against me, not to make my abjuration at Rome, for fear of taking a precipitate step. Providence, ever watchful over me, did not suffer these delays which might have been fatal, but ordered various events which hastened my conversion: A work of Father Segnery on the Guardian Angel fell at that time into my hands. This pious belief, that each of us has a tutelar Angel, the witness of all his actions, was not new to me; it had been inspired into me from my infancy, but till then had had little or no influence on my conduct. The perusal of this work renewed the impressions which had formerly been given me on this subject: I reflected on my past life; I reproached myself for having so often failed in the respect which I owed to my Guardian Angel, and I formed a resolution to be careful in future to avoid every thing which could displease him.* This attention to preserve myself from sin undoubtedly contributed to my conversion; at least it removed an obstacle to the grace which God was about to bestow. Such was my situation, when the death of Venerable Labre, and the

* One of the most solid and rational devotions is certainly that which respects the Angels, since it has for foundation the immense benefits which we have in all times received from these benevolent Beings. But this devotion ought to be peculiarly tender towards those who are appointed as our Guardians, and from whom we continually receive an infinity of temporal and spiritual favors.—This, therefore, after the devotion to Jesus and his blessed Virgin Mother, is what I most warmly inculcate on all my friends, particularly those who are young, as an excellent preservative against sin, and as a means of advancing in virtue.

Miracles which were said to have been obtained through his intercession, began to make a noise at Rome, and to become the subject of every conversation. Notwithstanding the instructions which I had received, and the lights which I had acquired, I was nowise disposed to credit the public reports concerning this truly extrordinary person. Of all my prejudices against Catholics, the deepest rooted was a formal disbelief of the miraculous facts which are said to have happened among them. I had been brought up in this persuasion common to all Protestants; who never having been able to attain the gift of miracles, like the Fox in the Fable, disdain it, and deny its existence. Not content with denying those which were published at that time, I made them the subject of my raillery, and in the Coffee houses passed some very unbecoming jests on the Servant of God, with whose poverty and uncleanliness I was shocked; and on this head I went farther than any even of my Protestant friends.—However the number and weight of the evidences increasing daily, I thought that it was my duty to examine the matter myself. I frequently conversed with the Confessor of the deceased, from whom I learnt a part of his life. I visited four persons who were said to have been miraculously cured; I was convinced by my own eyes of the state in which they then were; I questioned them concerning the state in which they had been; I informed myself of the nature and continuance of the illness with

which they had been attacked, and the circumstances of their cures, which had been operated in an instant. I collected the evidence of those to whom they were known, and after all these informations, made with the greatest care, I was fully convinced that the reality of each one of these miracles was at least well proved as the most authentic facts. One of these persons, a Nun in the Convent of St. Appollonia, had burst a blood vessel; she daily grew weaker and weaker for the space of eighteen months: and at length was so reduced that she could bear no nourishment: she invoked Venerable Labre; took with a lively faith a draught into which one of his relics had been dipped, and was cured in an instant; the same day she went to the Choir with the rest of the religious, ate without feeling any pain, and with ease performed the most painful offices of the Convent. This was attested by the Superior and six other Nuns of the same Community. I often saw the Nun who had been cured, spoke to her, and found her in perfect health and strength. Not content with these proofs, I visited the Physician who had attended her during the whole course of her illness: he confirmed all that the Community had said, and added, that he was ready to take his oath on the Gospel that the illness was naturally incurable. I continued to see the Nun during the rest of my stay at Rome, that is, for about four months. I had time to convince myself that her cure was lasting, and at my departure I left her in

perfect health.* Persuaded that there was something supernatural in these cures, I could not refrain from turning my thoughts on myself, and from considering the risk I ran by remaining in my own sect. These reflections involved me in much perplexity; I can hardly express the violent state in which I then was. Truth appeared to me on every side; but it was combatted by all the prejudices which I had sucked in from my infancy. I felt all the force of the arguments which Catholics oppose

* When Mr. Thayer had published the first edition of this narrative, a Minister of the Protestant Episcopal Church wrote to him that he was astonished that he should mention in this enlightened age, the miraculous cure of a Nun. To whom he answered: Facts, Sir, are facts in an enlightened as in an ignorant age; and the proofs of facts, which we have not seen ourselves, are always the same, that is, human testimony. Observe that in an enlightened age, such as ours, miraculous facts are with more difficulty imposed upon the world, because of the facility of detecting their falsity —Yet, at this very time our Church presses to the Public an infinity of such facts, and this at Rome, the resort of the curious and inquisitive of all nations, Protestant and Catholic; Rome, where open and hardy discussion, even in public Coffee houses, is as free as in any other part of the world; (for this I appeal to all Englishmen who have been on the spot;) and she defies the most scrutinizing critics to invalidate their truth. Such facts, Sir, are to be believed, or there is an end to all human faith.

Since Protestants thus question the greatest possible human testimony on such public and momentous facts, I am not at all surprised that one of your great men undertook to prove false all the miracles of the Gospel. He was at least more consistent than his Brethren, for he thus reasoned:

The Catholic Church boasts of miracles as great as those recorded in the Gospel, and proves them by numberless competent witnesses: We reject these; therefore, to be consistent we must also reject those of the Gospel, which equally lean on human testimony.

to the Protestant doctrine; but I had not the courage to yield: I clearly saw that the Catholic Church is established on innumerable and unanswerable proofs, and that her replies to the reproaches of Protestants are solid and satisfactory; but I must abjure errors in which I had been brought up, and which I had preached to others: I was a Minister in my own sect, and I must renounce my state and my fortune: I was tenderly attached to my family, and I must incur their indignation: interests so dear kept me back: in a word, my understanding was convinced, but my heart was not changed. I was in these circumstances, fluctuating and undetermined, when a little book, entitled *Manifesto di un Cavaliero Christiano convertito alla Religione Catholica*, (which it would be good to translate into several languages, and to spread wherever there are Protestants) was put into my hands. The author gives an historical account of his conversion, and briefly discusses the points which are controverted between Catholics and Protestants. He places in the beginning a prayer which was communicated to him by a Catholic to invoke the light of the Holy Ghost, and which the reader perhaps will not be sorry to see.

"Almighty and eternal God, Father of mercy, Saviour of mankind, I humbly intreat thee by thy sovereign goodness, to enlighten my mind, and to touch my heart, that by true faith, hope and charity, I may live and die in the true Religion of Jesus Christ. I am sure

that as there is but one true God, so there can be but one faith, one religion, one way of salvation, and that every other way which is opposite to this, can only lead to endless misery. It is this faith, Oh my God, which I earnestly desire to embrace, in order to save my soul. I protest therefore before thy divine Majesty, and I declare by all thy divine attributes, that I will follow that Religion which thou shalt show me to be true; and that I will abandon, at whatever cost, that in which I shall discover error and falsehood: I do not deserve, it is true, this favor, on account of the greatness of my sins, for which I have a profound sorrow, because they offend a God so good, so great, so holy and worthy of my love; but what I do not deserve, I hope to obtain from thy infinite mercy, and I conjure thee to grant through the merits of thy precious blood which was shed for us poor sinners by thy only begotten Son Jesus Christ. *Amen.*"

When I received this book I had a secret presentiment that it would give me the finishing stroke, and it was with extreme difficulty that I could prevail on myself to peruse it. My soul was, as it were, rent by two contrary emotions. What combats, what assaults did I not at that time endure: I cast my eyes over the prayer, but could not prevail upon myself to say it: I wished to be enlightened, yet feared being too much so. My temporal interest, and a thousand other motives, crowded upon my mind, and counter-balanced the salutary impressions of grace. At length the interest

of eternal salvation prevailed. I threw myself on my knees, I excited myself to say the prayer with the greatest sincerity I was capable of, and the violent agitation of my soul with the conflicts it had sustained drew from me an abundance of tears: I began then to read the book; which is a short exposition of the principal proofs which establish the truth of the Catholic Religion.—The whole of those different proofs which till then I had only viewed separately: so many rays of light, collected as it were into one centre, made a lively impression on my mind. Besides I did not make the same resistance as formerly to the divine grace: God spoke to my heart at the same time that he enlightened my understanding, and gave me grace to surmount the obstacles which had hitherto retarded me. I had not entirely finished the book, when I exclaimed, "My God; I promise to become a Catholic."—The same day I declared my intention to the family with which I lodged: it gave them joy, for they were truly pious. I went in the evening to the Coffee-house, where I imparted my change to all my Protestant friends; and to repair, as much as I could, the scandal which I had given, I defended the sanctity of Venerable Labre, and declared that I had more proofs of the truth of his miracles, than I would require for any fact whatever. Moreover, not to be ashamed of Jesus Christ, I invited a great number of friends to be the witnesses of my abjuration. Many lamented my weakness, others made a jest of it; but God who called

me to the faith, supported me, and I have a firm confidence that he will support me to my last breath.

I must acknowledge that before my abjuration, I had struggles for some time with my imagination respecting the worship of the Blessed Virgin and of the Saints. I had nevertheless been sufficiently instructed on this article, and did not doubt, but that it was profitable to employ with the Son, the intercession of his holy Mother, and that far from doing an injury by honoring and loving her whom he had so tenderly loved himself, it was the mean of honoring him the more; yet my ancient prejudices returned and disturbed my mind in spite of myself. The reproach of idolatry, which I had heard a thousand times brought against Catholics on this subject, still alarmed me, though I knew it to be ill-founded. I resembled those persons, who in their infancy, having had their imagination strongly impressed with the ridiculous stories of apparitions, at a riper age involuntarily shudder, where the same ideas recur, in spite of their reason, which wholly disowns them. I was obliged to offer violence to myself, and when I began to invoke the Blessed Virgin, I did it with trembling. I first addressed myself to God, protesting that I had no other design than to honor him, and that I desired to do it more perfectly by the intercession of his Blessed Mother, entreating him not to impute to me idolatrous intentions, which I disavowed with all my soul. Then

addressing myself to the Blessed Virgin, "Oh, tender mother," said I, "if it be lawful for me to implore thy succor, help me in the miserable state in which I am; it was through thee that the Saviour came to us, it is through thee that I desire to go to him. The Scriptures teach me that by thy means was wrought the first miracle of the evangelical law in the order of grace, (the sanctification of St. John the Baptist,) and the first in the order of nature, (the change of water into wine.) Here remains another to be performed; do not refuse to employ thy credit; I do not deserve it: too long have I not known thee; but now, though with fear and trembling, I begin to address thee; intercede for me with thy Divine Son." Then returning to God, "Oh Lord," said I, "I implore thy light; thou hast promised to listen to those who invoke thee; I do it from the bottom of my heart; thou art my witness that I seek truth at whatever expense: I cannot err in addressing my supplication to thy Blessed Mother: Thou thyself wouldst be the cause of my error." Confidence and tranquility were the fruits of this prayer. From that time I have always had recourse to the Blessed Virgin, and I am confident that I have received grace through her intercession: gratitude obliges me to make this acknowledgment. I endeavor to join in every institution which tends to her honor, and I have pledged myself, and study as much as can depend on me to extend the devotion to this dear Mother of God.

A very natural reflection here occurs: Can

God suffer a person to be deceived in the choice of a Religion, when after exact watchfulness over his own conduct, after fervent prayer, after long and toilsome investigation, he determines to embrace it at the expense of all that is most dear to him on earth,—family, state, fortune, reputation? If this religion be false, may he not say, with a celebrated divine, "Lord, it is thou who hast deceived me." This reflection will acquire a new degree of force, if I add the prodigious change which is made in me by conversion. I hesitate to publish it; but think it my duty so to do, in order to glorify the mercy of God, and to render homage to the Catholic Religion, which I have now the happiness to profess. What difference between my present and former state! My thoughts, my taste, my views are wholly changed; I do not know myself again. As soon as I had taken my determination, I renounced the profane studies in which I had been hitherto employed; I left my books half read; I parted with those which belonged to me. From that time my passions have had little influence over me; my projects of ambition and settlement in the world are entirely laid aside. I have no pretensions on earth: I take no pleasure but in the things of God: I feel within my heart a peace which I had never known; not, as formerly, the deceitful security of a stifled conscience, which presumes on the mercy of God, without seeing the danger to which it is exposed: it is the sweet confidence of a child who finds himself within the arms

of a father, and has reason to hope that nothing can tear him from them, notwithstanding the dangers with which he is surrounded. Yes, this religion is adapted to the heart: however powerful and solid the proofs are which convince me that it is the True Religion of Jesus Christ, the satisfaction, the pure joy which accompanies it, is for me another kind of proof, not less persuasive. The truths, which I had most difficulty in believing, are those in which I now find the greatest consolation. The mystery of the Eucharist, which appeared to me so incredible, is become an ever flowing source of spiritual delight: Confession, which I had considered as an insupportable yoke, seems infinitely sweet, by the tranquility which it produces in the soul. Oh! if Protestants and unbelievers could taste those sweets which are felt at the foot of the Altar, they would soon alter their sentiments! Oh! that I could be heard by them all, I would cry out to them: "Taste and see how sweet and good is the Lord to those who serve him in the holy society, which he has formed himself, which he vivifies by his spirit." This is the prevailing wish, this is the only desire of my heart, to extend as much as lies in my power, the dominion of the true faith, which is now my joy and comfort. I desire nothing more; for this purpose I wish to return to my own country, in hopes, notwithstanding my unworthiness, to be the instrument of the conversion of my countrymen; and such is my conviction of the truth of the Catholic Church, and my grati-

tude for the signal grace of being called to the true faith, that I would willingly seal it with my blood, if God would grant me this favor, and I doubt not but he would enable me to do it. I entreat all those who shall peruse this narrative, to pray with fervor the Father of Lights, and the God of Mercies, to bless the designs of his unworthy servant, and to open an easy access to the faith in my country, and to cause it to shoot forth and to fructify in a land in which it has as yet but imperfectly been known. Perhaps, and I dwell with pleasure on the consoling thought, perhaps, I say, he who raises up, and casts down empires, as he pleases, who does all for his elect, and for the interest of his Church, has only permitted and brought to an end, the surprising Revolution* of which we have been witnesses, in order to accomplish some great design, and much more happy Revolution in the order of grace. *Amen.*

JOHN THAYER.

AD MAJORAM DEI GLORIAM:
FOR GOD'S GREATEST GLORY.

* The Independence of the United States of America.

REV. MR. THAYER'S LETTER TO HIS BROTHER, IN ANSWER TO CERTAIN OBJECTIONS.

My Dear Friend and Brother:—I received with the greatest pleasure your letter by Mr. ———, in which I have the satisfaction to find, that the friendship and tenderness which you have had for me, from your earliest age, still continues: be persuaded that on my side there it not only continues but has acquired new force from time, absence, and much more from the heavenly religion I have embraced, whose peculiar property it is to perfect the moral virtues it finds in us.

After a tender effusion of heart, you declare your sorrow that I have embraced a Religion (as far as you are acquainted with it) fraught with bigotry and superstition. You did well to add, my dear brother, "as far as you are acquainted with it;" for let me tell you that it is entirely unknown to you. Surely nothing but the false representations and calumnies of our enemies, who have disguised what in itself is holy, reasonable, and worthy of all your respect, has made you give to our religion the odious terms of bigotry and superstition. This your ignorance however is common to most Protestants (for I can suppose but few capable by wary malice of imputing to us what they know in conscience to be false.) I confess that I was entirely surprised myself when I heard the exposition of the Catholic faith from the lips of its professors, because I found it totally different from what I had been taught to con-

ceive it. Believe me, my dear Brother, for I have no interest to deceive you. I desire nothing so much as your salvation and that of my dear relations, for which I would gladly suffer the most cruel death. This I declare before God who sees the sincerity of my heart. Before you read my answer to your objections, I beg you to retire a moment in secret, and there heartily and on your knees, solemnly promise God to renounce all your passions, and ask his grace to avoid every thing your conscience shews to be sin; and then say the prayer p. 109, in the narrative. If such be your dispositions, and if you faithfully cultivate them, my answers, though short, will leave no clouds in your mind; if you be not thus disposed, you do not sincerely seek the truth.

Your *first* objection, taken from the persecutions that Catholics have excited against their enemies, only proves that there have ever been bad Catholics, who under pretext of Religion have vented the malignity of their heart. Our Religion, far from approving, highly condemns all such Christians, and knows no other instrument of defence than mildness, patience and charity. There have been, and still are, cruel and persecuting Catholics, as there are also cruel Protestants; but neither the one nor the other are so in consequence of their principles, but because they deviate from them. We do not pretend that all Catholics are Saints; we unhappily see the contrary, and it is this that afflicts all the good. This, however, I can assure you, after a vast

acquaintance among Catholics of several different kingdoms, that I never yet saw a single one express any bitterness or animosity against Protestants; on the contrary, they pity them, and pray for them, as deluded and deceived. Examine whether such be the sentiments of your different sects towards us, and even towards each other, and afterwards decide, who have a persecuting spirit, we or you.

2. As we lay great stress on the unity of doctrine that ever has prevailed among Catholics, you think to weaken this our argument by opposing to us the unity that reigns among Mahometans. But let me tell you, that this unity of belief, which you attribute to them, is wholly imaginary; for according to the best historians, the Mahometans are first divided into the two great sects of Omar and Ali. These last, who are called Schiites, form five principal sects, which, like so many trees, shoot into seventy branches. Among all these different societies there is a vast variety of belief. Some doubt of their religion, and are pure Deists; others admit the *Metempsychosis;* others absolute predestination, &c. They give each other the titles of orthodox and heterodox, and carry their mutual hatred to such an extremity, that in their pilgrimage to Mecca, they form so many bands apart, refusing to pray together. There can be then no question between us about Mahometan unity, but only about that of Protestants. Now I assert that if you were all perfectly of the same opinion this would be the work of chance, and not the con-

sequence of your principles. There is nothing in your fundamental principle that necessarily produces this unity; on the contrary, your principle, that "every one is to examine for himself," must be naturally a source of division, whereas the constitution of our Church is such, that it is impossible there can be division concerning articles of faith. Remark, I say, *concerning articles of faith;* for in matters of opinion each one is free to hold what he pleases: but as soon as the Church has decided, that such a point belongs to the faith, all true Catholics, because they hold her infallible, necessarily submit to the decision. Those that refuse to submit by this very refusal really separate themselves from the Church, since they renounce her fundamental principle, *i. e.* that she is the infallible "basis of truth," 1 Tim. iii. 15.

3. This individual unity of faith, is evidently marked in Scripture, and was certainly Christ's intention in founding his Church. It is said, Ephes. iv. 4. 5. there is "one body and one Spirit;" to animate it, "one Lord, one faith, one baptism," *i. e.* our faith ought to be *one* in the same sense as our Lord Jesus is ONE, *i. e.* strictly and absolutely so. Christ prays (John xvii. 20. 21.) that those who believe in him may be united in the faith in a manner resembling, as far as possible, the union between the persons of the Holy Trinity, and gives this union as the mark by which the world is to know that he received his mission from his father; for without such a unity of

faith among the Disciples, the world would never have believed that their Master was sent from God. Perhaps you suppose that Christ there only prays for union of hearts, and gives the union formed by mutual charity as the distinguishing mark of Christians; but even this explanation demonstrates the necessity of sameness of faith, since nothing so much destroys that charity, as difference in religion. Witness the wars that have taken place in the world on this account, and the coldness with which different sects ever regard each other. Our Church alone can pretend to this *unity;* which of itself suffices to convince the unprejudiced that she alone is Christ's spouse; yet we do not pretend to assign this as the only note to discern her: there are three others marked in the creed, which you admit as well as we, viz. HOLINESS, APOSTOLICITY, and CATHOLICITY. Examine whether all or any of these marks belong to your sects.

4. Observe that all the Fathers of the Church had our idea of the necessity of the unity of faith in Christ's Church; you as well as we regard them as Saints; and certainly by their nearness to Christ's and the Apostles' times, they must have known their mind. I could cite volumes of texts from their works to prove this, as well as the other articles of our faith; but the bounds of a letter forbid.

5. What seems to give you the most pain in our doctrine is, the *infallibility* which we attribute to our Church. A simple explanation of this point must remove, I think, whatever

in it appears alarming. Observe *first*, that we attribute this infallibility to the whole Church, *i. e.* to the majority of Bishops joined to the Pope, and not to the Pope alone. If some particular Divines regard the Pope alone as infallible, this their opinion cannot be justly imputed to the whole Church, which has never defined any such thing. But in order to put our doctrine of infallibility in a clear light, let us recur to that moment when Christ revealed "all truth" to his Apostles, and established them, and the pastors their successors, as depositories of these truths. This body of pastors, thus established, have, in all ages, declared every rising novelty to be contrary to the sacred deposit committed to them by Christ. Thus when Arius denied the divinity of Christ, the Church condemned him, and declared that she had received the contrary: Thus when Pelagius denied original sin, the Church declared his doctrine contrary to her deposit, and brought baptism, which had ever been practised in her bosom, as a standing proof of our corrupt origin. Her infallibility consists then in the public and perpetual testimony that she ever renders to truths of fact. For what is the Christian Religion, my dear brother? It is a public fact. Whether Christ has existed, taught such and such doctrines, wrought such miracles? Whether the Bible be written by such and such authors? &c. All these points are matters of fact that have fallen under the senses, and that can only be known by eye or ear witnesses. The teaching Church,

i. e. the majority of Bishops united to the Pope, is this body of hereditary witnesses: and you cannot surely refuse her an infallibility, (*i. e.* a capacity of exactly relating facts) which you readily grant not only to whatever considerable society, civil or religious, but even to individuals. When the Mahometans, who are composed of different nations, and consequently of different interests, unanimously attest that at such a time they received such a doctrine from Mahomet, no one of common sense can dispute a public fact of this nature. Why then should you refuse the testimony of the Catholic Church, that is composed of various nations directly opposed in their interests, and often at war; when all her pastors, as unanimously *at least* as the Mahometans, declare, that they have received such doctrines from Christ and the Apostles, and all agree in the exposition of all the articles that belong to the faith, and deny that there has ever been the least change in their Church? And how is it possible to suppose any change? There is in the first place a body of pastors, as we have said, established to prevent all innovations: the perpetual return of our holidays put continually before the eyes of the faithful, our mysteries, many of which are and ever have been daily practised. For instance, Christians ever communicated. Is it reasonable? Is it possible to suppose, that when their pastors presented them what appeared to be bread, they did not ask what they were to receive in this sacrament, whether mere bread or the real

body of Christ? Christians then, in all ages, must have known what they were to believe in so important a matter, especially the nearer they were to the Apostles' times, when pastors were certainly exact to instruct their flock. Whatever you suppose to have been their faith in this point, it must have continued without any alteration: for if there had been the smallest change, mankind, who are naturally turbulent, would have cried out in a matter so vastly important. If you say that they did so, but that it has not come to our ears; I answer that this is truly strange, since we have cotemporary historians, that have recounted the minutest disputes about words and letters, that have happened in every period of the Church, (not excepting the times of the grossest ignorance) and so essential a change as this they would have passed in silence! How incredible!

'6. Besides, what interest could the Church have had to change her doctrine? How could all the different nations that compose it, have combined to make this change, since their interests are all different. If the French, for example, had attempted this change, would not the English have opposed them? And even, if all her parts had united to form this change, would not heretics, who have at all times existed round about the Church, have reproached this alteration, and thus have transmitted it to posterity? Form the same reasoning for all the other articles of our faith, where you suspect a change, as for this of the real

presence of Christ in the holy Communion. Thus you see, my dear friend, that common sense forces us to receive the Church's testimony, when she declares that she has received such and such truths from Christ and the Apostles, and that she has preserved them unaltered. Now when we are arrived to admit her testimony concerning what Christ and the Apostles delivered her, from that moment, if consistent, we are Catholics; since all Christians hold that what Christ and the Apostles taught is certainly true. This *moral infallibility*, which you are obliged to grant to the Church, as to all other great societies, becomes *divine* in virtue of the promise of Christ, who has expressly communicated to her his own immutability.

7. This second sort of *infallibility*, far superior to the first, because supernatural, appears in a striking manner in the words of Christ to his Apostles: "Go and teach all nations, and behold I am with you" (*i. e.* teaching) "until the end of the world." Now a Church, that has Christ present while it teaches, must certainly be infallible; and this presence is *surely* promised to the successors of the Apostles, to whom the words "until the world's end," must be applied, since the Apostles themselves were all dead, except St. John, before the end of the first century. Again Christ promised his Apostles, *John* xiv. 16. 17. "the Spirit of truth to remain with them for ever," *i. e.* to the end of the world. This text, for the same reason as the preceding,

must also be applied to the Apostles' successors, the pastors and teachers of the Church; which, having thus for guide "the Spirit of truth," must necessarily avoid all errors in faith, *i. e.* must be infallible. I was then supported by reason and scripture, and not merely, as you say, "*on the legends of our Church,*" when I said *that the Pope, with the majority of our Bishops, are directed by the Spirit to decide what we are to believe;* for it is as public and incontestable a fact that the Pope is the successor of St. Peter, and that the other Bishops are successors of the other Apostles, as that Lewis XVI. is successor of St. Lewis.

8. Again, reason persuades us that Christ's Church ought to be infallible. Christ declares, "that he that hears her, hears himself." He commands us to obey her, under pain of "being regarded as heathens." God surely cannot order us to *obey* one that is capable of teaching us error; otherwise he would be himself the author of them.—Besides why did God establish the Church? "In order," says St. Paul, *Ephes.* iv. 24. "that we may not be tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine;" *i. e.* that we may never be *in doubt* concerning what we ought to believe. But you Protestants, can you ever be free from doubts? This is impossible, since you have no infallible authority to settle them. However a visible and infallible authority distinct from scripture, (which is the law) is absolutely necessary to decide the contentions that arise among Christians. Where

this authority is not admitted, there is no fixed rule, no invariable articles of faith. The proof of this is the increasing multitude of sects among you, which frequently end in Socinianism, Deism, &c. But what is the most palpable demonstration of what I advance, is, the late alteration that those of the Church of England among you have made in the articles of faith. What are articles of faith? They are eternal truths revealed by God, and founded on his veracity: As the divine veracity is unchangeable, the truths that depend on it must remain the same; for "heaven and earth will pass away before one of God's words shall fail," and therefore it is not only absurd but impious to attempt to change them, since this is making God a liar. Experience then proves, that you need an infallible judge.

9. Nor can you reply that the bible is this unerring judge; for the bible is the law; it is a mute book, and the subject of dispute: we need a sovereign and visible judge to declare who is right and who is wrong. I repeat it, the bible cannot be this judge; for without the decision of the Church, we must always have some of these doubts: 1. Whether the bible itself be a canonical book, the production of the holy Spirit; 2. Whether it be entire and unaltered. This second doubt is reasonably founded on the various readings of different manuscripts; 3. Whether it be faithfully translated; and 4. Which is the most important, Whether we have ascertained its true meaning. Amid so many doubts and incertitudes, where

can be the certitude of faith? Yet our faith ought to be so firm and unshaken, that we should be ready, like the Martyrs, to die in its defence; otherwise we are unworthy of Christ and of the name of Christians. We Catholics can have none of the incertitudes, because we submit to the Church which we believe to be infallible.

10. Further, what evinces the necessity of an infallible Church, is that such a one *alone* is adapted to the bulk of mankind. Is not God, according to St. Paul, "the Saviour of all men?" Does he not will, and even show the most tender solicitude for the salvation of his children, of the poor and ignorant? Are the poor artizans and laborers, who are continually occupied by the cares of life; and women, who do not apply to study; are they, I say, capable of that eternal discussion and examination which your principles demand? No, for this the longest life of the most learned would not suffice.

11. This article of the infallibility of the Church once established, a Christian's doubts immediately vanish; for if once sure that God cannot permit the Church to deceive me, from that moment I am obliged in conscience to receive all her decisions, even in things that appear the most incredible to reason.

12. The first consequence drawn from the Church's infallibility is, that she has never erred, and that Luther, Calvin, &c. who have pretended it, have made Christ a liar, who has declared, *Matt.* xvi. 18. "That the gates of

hell shall not prevail against his Church." Now if error has infected her, the gates of hell *have* prevailed, and Christ *has not* fulfilled his promise.—The second consequence is, that all those, who *knowingly* and *wilfully* follow those pretended Reformers are in evident danger of eternal ruin. Those persons can never give a satisfactory answer to the following argument: In Luther and Calvin's time, either the Catholic Church was Christ's true spouse, or some other society was so; or else, Christ's true Church had ceased. If the Catholic society was at that time Christ's Church, no one could separate from it without risking his salvation, since there is no salvation for those that are separated from Christ—If any other society was then Christ's true Church, they were obliged to join it under pain of damnation—If they say that Christ's Church had ceased, they make Christ a liar, who has promised its perpetual duration in spite of the combined rage of earth and hell.

13. What I have said on *Infallibility* will give you a just idea of what we mean by *Tradition*, which the Protestants so greatly misrepresent. By this word we mean nothing else than the *general, unanimous* and *constant testimony* of the Church of all ages about the truths revealed by Christ, and taught by the Apostles.

14. To show you the necessity of a supreme authority in the Church, in order to decide all contests that arise, I reminded you that there was never yet in the world any state which

had not its high tribunal from which there is no appeal. This you allow to be necessary in all civil governments, to prevent anarchy and confusion; but you add, "that there is no parity between civil and religious societies:" I wish that you had pointed out the difference; for both are bodies of men, *i. e.* of beings governed by reason and passions; and taking men as they are, (for we are not speaking of an imaginary order of things) there is no other means of forming any kind of society than that of authority and submission. Law and subordination are absolutely necessary, without which there can be no union, and each will do what he pleases. All the individuals will be so many members separated and dispersed, that will no longer form a body. It is true, that ecclesiastical laws must be different from civil ones, in this sense, that the one oblige the mind, and the other the body; the one impose spiritual pains, and the other corporal ones. The end proposed by these two societies is also different; that of the first is the good of the soul; that of the second is the good of the body; but still both are visible societies composed of men; and consequently it is as absurd to pretend to form a Church without imposing laws on the mind, as to pretend to form a State without imposing laws on the body. This absurdity is so manifest, that there has never yet been among you or elsewhere, any ecclesiastical body, that has not imposed some sort of laws on the minds of its members. Why then blame

that which obliges to submit our minds to the doctrine and decision of the Church.

15. You say, that "we are accountable to none but God for our belief;" and intimate, that you think all religions equally conduct to salvation. This opinion is the necessary appendix to the Protestant principles. If the compass of a letter would permit, I would fully set before your eyes the horrid consequences of this dreadful principle. I could demonstrate, that it tends directly not only to introduce all Christian sects, but Mahometanism, Deism, and even Atheism, and consequently that it tends to overturn entirely the Christian Religion, which Christ has established at the expense of his blood. Is it possible that the Son of God could have descended from heaven to establish such an *indifference* of Religion? Is it consistent with the infinite wisdom of God to act thus entirely in vain? By this system you accuse the Apostles, the Apostolic men, and all the Martyrs, of the greatest imaginable folly, for having suffered and died to establish a Religion that was useless, since men could be saved without it. Are not these few reflections capable of giving horror for this system, to one that still retains the smallest spark of faith, and respect for the gospel of our adorable Jesus? Consider this horrible precipice on which you hang, and *that* in consequence of Protestant principles, and shudder at your danger.

16. I now pass to your other difficulties.—If you take literally the words; "Call no man

Father," you must then conclude that it is a sin to give this name to those, who, after God, are the authors of our being. Christ in that passage evidently speaks of the Supreme Father, since he adds "for one is your Father in heaven," that is, God, who according to St. Paul is the Author of all Paternity. If any thing can be inferred from these words, it seems to me that it must be this: "Do not quit the true pastors whom I establish to govern you, to follow innovators who become fathers and authors of new sects."

17. When St. Paul says, "We do not Lord it or domineer over your faith," he does not certainly pretend that it is lawful to examine and reject his decisions, since he anethematizes even an Angel that should preach a doctrine different from his. (*Gal.* i. 8. 9.) If St. Paul had been a Protestant he would have held a different language; "If any one announce to you a different doctrine from mine, examine it without prejudice, and if it appear more correct than mine, embrace it and reject mine." So far from this, he declares that its being different from his is a sufficient reason for rejecting it. Is it possible to exercise a more absolute authority (or if you please, *domination*) over consciences? The sense of this passage must then be; "Though we exact an absolute submission, we do not domineer over you, because we are only the instruments and organs that God employs to establish his just reign over your consciences;" which certainly is not domination. Thus when the Church

demands our acceptance of her decisions, she does not domineer because she does not act in her own name, but in that of Christ.

He does not domineer that uses a power received from lawful authority, unless he use it in a tyrannical manner. The Church is so far from this tyrannical exercise of her power, that, like a tender mother, she consults the wants of her children, and she never punishes till after having tried in vain all mild means.

18. As to the Bereans, who are praised for searching the scripture, they were not as yet in the Church. Not only do we permit examination to those that are in the same state; but we even press, exhort and conjure them to examine.

But when we have once professed the Church's infallibility, and entered her bosom, she forbids, *not all examination*, but all that proceeds from *real* doubt. This her conduct is evidently just and wise, since all *doubtful* examination, after conviction that she is infallible, is absurd, and practically contradicts our profession.

This your objection come from your belief, that we lock up the Bible from the hands of the people. It is true that we are obliged in conscience to explain it in the sense of the Church; but this is not locking it up. Have lawyers ever pretended that the study of the laws was prohibited, because they are obliged to explain them in the sense generally received in the state? Does a mother forbid the use of knives to her children, because she teaches so

to employ them as to prevent their cutting themselves?

19. Let me mention to you a strong presumption, that ours is the only true religion, *viz.* that it is the only one which inspires the most heroic sacrifices. I have seen, and often see, persons of the first rank in life, delicate ladies, &c. renounce all the pleasures, riches and honors of this world, and devote themselves, some to serve the sick and dying in infected hospitals, others to the most rigorous penance in convents. Among these last holds the first rank Madame Louisa, aunt to the king of France. She was the darling daughter of Lewis XV. She quitted the most brilliant court of Europe in the vigor of life; and entered the order of the Carmelites, among whom are practised the most excessive austerities. There she performs the lowest offices among the Nuns her Sisters; and all this to honor and imitate the humility of her Divine Master, Jesus, who, though Lord of all, took upon himself the form of a slave, and became obedient even to the death of the Cross. She has assured me with her own lips, that she never tasted, amid the pleasures of the world, any of those pure delights that she now tastes amidst the poverty, obedience and humiliations of a cloister.

20. Permit me also to add a word upon the Catholicity, *i. e.* universality of the Church. This attribute which you admit in the Apostles' creed as well as we, is expressly marked in the prophecies; see Gen. xxii. 18. Malac.

i. 11. Psal. ii. 8. Acts i. 8. This universal extent does not certainly agree to any other Church except ours, which is so spread throughout all the *notable* parts of the world, that it cannot be hid from any sincere searcher of truth. We have an infinity of Bishops and Missioners in the East Indies. There are many millions of Catholics in China; and we have a spacious Church within the bounds of the Imperial Palace at Pekin. It would be the greatest folly to dispute all these public facts, since we have seminaries for the education of foreign missioners, and one particularly at Rome called *Propaganda Fide*, where I myself have seen a vast number of youth from various nations, who are there ordained priests, and afterwards sent home to preach to their friends and countrymen. We have in Paris the only son of the king of Cochin-China, who was conducted thither by one of the Bishops of that country.

21. If the reasons, by which I have endeavored to defend our religion, convince you of its truth, do not blush to own it openly and boldly. It is noble to confess and correct an error. Besides, your error, if you do not make it personal, by a wilful adherence to it after it is known to be such, is rather the fault of your education than yours. Remember that Christ threatens to renounce before the assembled universe, those who refuse to confess him before men.

22. O my dear brother, would to God, I could express to you all the sensations that I have felt with respect to you and my family,

since the hand of God has deigned to draw me from those errors in which I was engaged, by birth and education! Your unhappiness has ever been so strongly impressed on my mind; that my prayers for you have been continual. I cannot think without shuddering, that if we continue separated from each other in our belief, one of us must *necessarily** perish forever. Yet this is what I must conclude from comparing this text of St. Paul, "*One faith*," with that other of the same Apostle, "*Without faith it is impossible to please God*," and consequently to be saved. There can be but one of us in the right, since our faith is entirely opposite. If it be you who are in error, as I am fully and intimately persuaded, give me the ineffable consolation of seeing you return to the bosom of the Catholic Church, which *alone* is the *true spouse* of Jesus. United together in the arms of this tender mother, we will then use every means to obtain of God the conversion of him to whom we owe our being; yes, we will employ all our zeal to become in some sort the fathers of our father, by procuring him a life infinitely more precious than that which we have received from him.—This, my dearest brother and most cherished friend, is what I desire with the greatest possible ardor. I conjure you by the bowels of the charity of our Heavenly Father, and of his Son Jesus

* Mr. Thayer supposes there can be no place for invincible ignorance in his brother, since he writes to him as to one in some measure acquainted with the points which separate Protestants from Catholics.

Christ, to think as seriously as if at the eve of your death, on what I have written, and to beg God's light to guide you. Give this mark of tenderness and friendship to a brother, who lives only for you, for our father, relations and countrymen.—I am, with all possible cordiality and affection,

Your tender and loving
Friend and Brother,
J. THAYER.

Paris, ——— 1787.

MR. NATH. THAYER,
Boston, Mass.

P. S.—If you communicate this letter to any of your ministers (which I should wish) I beg you not to be content with whatever answers they give; but write them down together with your own objections, and on reflection you will find the answer to all in the little that I have written. The more you read and meditate the Bible, the more you will see the harmony and consistency of our principles, and the inconsistency and contradiction of those of your ministers. When I say, *the inconsistency and contradiction of the principles of your ministers*, I do not speak from any bitterness or animosity. If I were present among them, I trust they would soon see how sincerely I love them in Jesus Christ, and that neither passion nor party-spirit guides my pen, but the sole love of truth and the light of faith.

I am, &c. J. T.

Catalogue of Catholic Standard Publications.

Haydock's Folio Bible, bound plain,	$ 35 00
Challoner's Quarto Edition of the Doway Bible, with Ten Engravings, bound,	10 00
Challoner's Octavo Edition of the Doway Bible	5 00
Butler's Lives of the Saints, in 12 vols. embellished with forty Engravings.—To this edition is attached the ecclesiastical history of Ireland,	22 00
Doway Testament, with Dr. Challoner's Notes, Octavo,	1 25
Ditto, do. Duodecimo, for schools, very cheap,	
Ditto, do. Pocket Edition, fine paper, elegant,	62
Power's New Testament,	1 25
Reeve's History of the Old and New Testament, for schools,	1 25
Ditto, fine paper, Octavo,	1 50
Dr. Milner's End of Religious Controversy	1 50
——— Vindication of ditto.	1 25
——— Letters to a Prebendary,	1 25
——— Summary,	62
The Instruction of Youth in christian piety, by Charles Gobinet, D. D.	2 00
Kolhman's Unitarianism, 2 vols. in one,	2 00
Ward's Errata, showing the difference between the catholic and protestant version of the sacred scriptures,	1 25
Gahan's Church History,	1 00
Ward's Cantos on the Reformation,	1 00
——— Controversy with Richel,	1 00
Bishop Hay's Sincere Christian, 2 vols.	2 00

Bishop Hay's Pious Christian, 2 vols.	2 00
England's Conversion and Reformation compared,	1 00
Elevation of the Soul to God,	1 00
Holy Week,	1 25
Hornihold's Real Principles of Catholics,	1 00
Life of St. Patrick,	75
O'Leary's Tracts,	1 50
Short Way to end Disputes, by Rev. R. Manning,	75
An Answer to Dr. Warton's Reply to Bishop Carrol, by Rev. S. F. Gallagher,	50
Pious Biography of Young Men, or, the Virtuous Scholars, a suitable Premium Book for teachers, or Present from parents to their children,	75
Ditto, do. for young ladies,	50
Meditations translated from the French, by the Rev. R. Baxter,	1 00
Memorial of a Christian Life,	1 00
Poor Man's Catechism,	1 00
Fleury's Historical Catechism,	1 00
Challoner's Meditations, 2 vols.	2 00
Roman Missal in different bindings, from	$1 50 to 3 00
True Piety, a prayer book, New Edition, decidedly the best compilation ever yet published, in different bindings, from	75 cts. to 2 00
Pious Guide, from	75 cts. to 2 00
Key to Paradise, from	75 cts. to 2 00
A new edition of Prince Hohenloe's Prayer Book, in different bindings, from	75 cts. to 2 00
Sufferings of Christ, 2 vols.	2 00
Catholic Scripturist,	75
Christian's Guide, from	50 cts. to 1 25

A manual of controversies, by Henry Turbervil, a Clergyman,	1 00
Catholic Christian instructed in the ceremonies of the Catholic Church, by the Rt. Rev. R. Challoner,	75
St Augustine's Confessions,	75
——————— Soliloquies,	50
——————— Manual	37
True Wisdom,	25
Gother's Instructions for Confession,	37
The following of Christ, translated from the Latin of Thomas A. Kempis,	50
Spiritual Combat,	50
Think well on't; or reflections on the great truths of the christian religion, for every day in the month, by R. Challoner, D. D.	37
Imitation of the Blessed Virgin,	62
Devout Communicant,	62
Cobbett's Letters,	62
Papist represented and misrepresented,	37
Net for the Fishers of Men,	6
Grounds of Catholic Doctrine,	25
Bossuet's Exposition of the Catholic Doctrine,	25
The History of the Protestant Religion,	25
Fifty Reasons,	37
Lessons for Lent,	25
Children's Companion,	25
Hay's Abridgement of the Catholic doctrine,	
French Prayer Books,	
Touchstone,	
Lingard's History of England, 10 vols. $1 50 per vol.	15 00
Vade Mecum, in different bindings,	

☞ Liberal discount given to Charitable Institutions.